



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

---

|                                |                                      |                         |            |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| <b>Location:</b>               | Victoria, MN                         | <b>Accident Number:</b> | CEN21FA360 |
| <b>Date &amp; Time:</b>        | August 7, 2021, 17:40 Local          | <b>Registration:</b>    | N9156Z     |
| <b>Aircraft:</b>               | Mooney M20M                          | <b>Injuries:</b>        | 3 Fatal    |
| <b>Flight Conducted Under:</b> | Part 91: General aviation - Personal |                         |            |

---

On August 7, 2021, about 1740 central daylight time, a Mooney M20M, N9156Z, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Victoria, Minnesota. The private pilot and two passengers sustained fatal injuries. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

A review of preliminary air traffic control information revealed the airplane departed Chandler Field Airport (AXN), Alexandra, Minnesota, at 1654 on an instrument flight rules (IFR) flight plan and climbed to 5,000 ft mean sea level (msl) enroute to Flying Cloud Airport (FCM), Minneapolis, Minnesota. After a descent to 3,000 ft msl, the pilot was cleared to fly the instrument landing system (ILS) approach to Runway 10R at FCM.

About 9.5-miles from the runway while on final approach, the airplane tracked left of the ILS course and descended below 2,700 ft msl. The airplane then transitioned to a right turn and descended below 2,500 ft msl, which triggered a low altitude alert to the FCM tower controller. The controller transmitted a safety alert, which the pilot acknowledged. The airplane subsequently made an abrupt left turn and entered a rapid descent, during which radar contact and communications were lost. A distress call was not transmitted.

Several witnesses heard loud popping noises and observed the airplane in a rapid descent with both wings “folded up”. Review of security video near the accident site revealed the airplane was upright at ground impact, with both wings deflected up toward a vertical position.

The airplane impacted the ground on a northerly heading and a post impact fire ensued. Both wings were found separated from the fuselage, with the left- and right-wing main and rear spars fractured near the wing rib outboard of their respective main landing gear.

The left horizontal stabilizer and left elevator were found about 720 and 800 ft southwest of the accident site, respectively. The remainder of the airplane’s flight control surfaces were accounted for at the accident site. A 6-inch section of the main wing spar upper cap splice was found about 300 ft southwest of the accident site.

Initial examination revealed the left horizontal stabilizer separated about 6 inches outboard of the vertical stabilizer. The three outboard hinge blocks of the left elevator remained attached to

the left horizontal stabilizer, with the rivets pulled out and sheared off the elevator. The main and rear wings spars were highly fragmented in the center of the airplane between the separated left and right wings. An 18-inch section of the main wing lower spar cap, located at the center of the main wing spar, was fractured at both ends.

The propeller was separated from the crankshaft due to impact damage. Two propeller blades were bent aft, one blade was curled forward, and all three blades exhibited chordwise and leading-edge scaring. The engine crankshaft was rotated, with normal thumb compression obtained at all cylinders. The airplane was retained for further examination.

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

|                       |         |                                       |          |
|-----------------------|---------|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Aircraft Make:</b> | Mooney  | <b>Registration:</b>                  | N9156Z   |
| <b>Model/Series:</b>  | M20M    | <b>Aircraft Category:</b>             | Airplane |
| <b>Amateur Built:</b> | No      |                                       |          |
| <b>Operator:</b>      | On file | <b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b> | None     |

**Operator Designator Code:**

### Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

|   |                        |                                     |                       |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>     | IMC                    | <b>Condition of Light:</b>          | Day                   |
| <b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b> | KFCM, 907 ft msl       | <b>Observation Time:</b>            | 16:53 Local           |
| <b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>     | 8 Nautical Miles       | <b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>       | 22°C / 20°C           |
| <b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>          |                        | <b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b> | 10 knots / , 80°      |
| <b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>                  | Overcast / 1100 ft AGL | <b>Visibility:</b>                  | 9 miles               |
| <b>Altimeter Setting:</b>               | 29.77 inches Hg        | <b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>   | IFR                   |
| <b>Departure Point:</b>                 | Alexandria, MN (AXN)   | <b>Destination:</b>                 | Minneapolis, MN (FCM) |

### Wreckage and Impact Information

|                            |         |                             |                       |
|----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Crew Injuries:</b>      | 1 Fatal | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b>     | Destroyed             |
| <b>Passenger Injuries:</b> | 2 Fatal | <b>Aircraft Fire:</b>       | On-ground             |
| <b>Ground Injuries:</b>    |         | <b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>  | None                  |
| <b>Total Injuries:</b>     | 3 Fatal | <b>Latitude, Longitude:</b> | 44.859074, -93.663331 |

## Administrative Information

---

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Folkerts, Michael

**Additional Participating Persons:** Gregory Thurston; Flight Standards District Office; Minneapolis, MN  
Nikolas Halatsis; Flight Standards District Office; Minneapolis, MN  
Troy Helgeson; Lycoming Engines; Williamsport, PA  
Kevin Hawley; Mooney International Corp.; Kerrville, TX

**Note:**