

NTSB Field Notes

NTSB IIC-John Brannen

Party members

FAA – Mike Machnik & Dwayne Hudson

Textron Aviation – Mike Gibbons

Continental Motors – Chris Lang

Notification of accident 10/13/14 @0000

Accident date/time 10/12/14 @ 2240

Aircraft – Beech 58 Baron, N31EW

Location – [REDACTED] Palos Hills, IL

Circumstances – The airplane departed MDW about 2235 bound for Lawrence, KS. Departure was VFR with no flight plan from runway 22L. After takeoff, ATC instructed the pilot to proceed on course which was the last transmission.

The airplane impacted tree and terrain in a residential area 6 nm southwest of MDW. Several tree branches exhibited clean cuts consistent with propeller impact. Some of the cut branches were about 4 inches in diameter. The initial impact point was about 20 feet north of a house on the neighboring lot. The house sustained some damage to the gutter, soffit, roof, and a window. There was a SUV parked in the driveway that was struck by debris from the airplane. Two side windows were broken out and there was mud/dirt on the side of the car. The entire airplane was crushed and fragmented. All of the major airframe pieces were contained within the wreckage distribution path that extended to the southeast, across the street and into the front yards of the houses on the opposite side of the street. Most of the wreckage was located at the initial impact point with smaller pieces of debris scattered along the wreckage path. The proximity of the initial impact point with the surrounding trees was consistent with a near vertical impact. The entire fuselage was crushed and almost unrecognizable. The right engine propeller was about 1 foot below ground level and the engine crankshaft had fractured at the propeller hub. The engine was lying on the ground. The left engine was buried in the ground and the propeller was about 2 to 2-1/2 feet below ground level. The propeller was still attached to the engine. The scene was photo-documented and the wreckage recovered and relocated to a storage facility for further examination.

At the storage facility, a partial layout of the main airframe pieces was accomplished. All of the major airframe parts and flight controls were confirmed to be present during the layout. The control system was examined and cable continuity was verified from the control surfaces to the cabin area of the airplane. Due to the amount of damage to the cockpit, verification of yoke and rudder pedal continuity was not possible. There were no identified anomalies with respect to the airframe or control system. All breaks appeared to be due to impact forces. The engines examination consisted of removal of cowling and airframe components to enable shipping for further examination at Continental Motors, and a borescope examination of the cylinders. The borescope exam did not reveal any anomalies. The engines will be crated and shipped to Continental Motors for a teardown examination.

Review of aircraft records showed that the airplane was equipped with an Avidyne EX500 MFD and a Honeywell EGPWS. Consultation with an NTSB recorder lab specialist revealed that the Avidyne unit records only cursory XM weather data. The data recorded is the confirmation of weather download, but the actual weather data is not recorded. This unit will not be recovered based on the consultation. The EGPWS unit is capable of recording many parameters dependent on how the unit was installed and integrated with other airplane systems. An attempt to locate the unit will be made. If found, the unit will be sent to the NTSB recorder lab for attempted download of any stored data.