

Summary of Aircraft Examination

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD Office of Aviation Safety Washington, DC 20594

SUMMARY OF AIRCRAFT EXAMINATION

-- CEN22FA064 --

A. OVERVIEW

On December 8, 2021, about 1013 mountain standard time, a Cranford Vans RV-4 airplane, N456MC, sustained substantial damage when it was involved in an accident near Walsenburg, Colorado. The pilot sustained fatal injuries. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

B. PARTICIPANTS

Representatives from the NTSB and the Huerfano County Sheriff's Department participated in an exam of the aircraft at the accident site on the day following the accident.

C. SUMMARY OF ACCIDENT SITE EXAMINATION

The accident site was located in canyon that contained rocky and scrub-type tree covered terrain. Postaccident examination of the accident site revealed airplane debris consistent with the left wing and wing tip were at the initial impact area. The airplane's forward fuselage impacted rocky terrain, and the airplane fragmented into multiple sections. The engine, fractured composite propeller blades, and the main landing gear were separated and came to rest between the initial impact and main wreckage. The main wreckage consisted of the cockpit/cabin, empennage, and inboard sections of the left and right wings (see Figures 1. and 2.).

Summary of Aircraft Examination



Figure 1. Accident Site

Summary of Aircraft Examination



Figure 2. Main Wreckage

The outboard left wing was fragmented and separated structure was noted between the initial impact and main wreckage. The left aileron was separated and located near the initial impact and left wing tip. The outboard right wing was bent and distorted; the right wing remained partially attached to the fuselage. The vertical stabilizer and rudder remained partially attached to the fuselage.

The forward fuselage was crushed aft and sustained impact damage. The forward seat structure was crushed aft and fragmented. The canopy was fractured into multiple sections, and a majority of the canopy came to rest adjacent to the main wreckage.

Flight control continuity was established from the cockpit to all flight control surface connections. The engine and propeller cockpit control assembly was separated. The throttle and mixture control levers were found in the full forward positions. The composite propeller blades were sheared off at the propeller hub.

Postaccident examination of the airplane revealed no evidence of any preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures that would have precluded normal operations.

----- end of summaries -----