



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Brian C. Rayner
Senior Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: September 28, 2022
Person: Ed Kessler – Airport Founder - Witness
NTSB Accident Number: ERA21FA377 Lansing, WV
Subject: Witness Account

Narrative:

Mr. Kessler was one of the family founders of the WV32 Airport. His family had owned the property for over 40 years. He was interviewed at the airport with his brother, Captain Garry Kessler, who operated the airport, and both of their statements were consistent throughout.

Mr. Kessler said the men loaded and boarded the plane and taxied out for departure on runway 22. He heard the airplane power up and watched it accelerate. When the airplane reached the point where “airplanes usually lift off,” echoing a phrase used by his brother and another witness, it continued accelerating down runway 22. The takeoff was aborted, the airplane continued to the runway end, and subsequently attempted a takeoff from runway 04, which was also aborted.

The airplane then turned around and accelerated for takeoff from runway 22.

According to Mr. Kessler, the airplane lifted off “maybe” 800 ft before the departure end of the runway, cleared the trees at the departure end, and flew over Mill Creek which ran below and perpendicular to the runway. The terrain on the opposite bank was higher than the runway and included mature trees. As the airplane approached the trees off the departure end of the runway, it banked steeply left, and disappeared below the trees. Mr. Kessler described a steep bank and said that the engine sound was smooth and continuous from engine start until the sound of impact.