

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety

Washington, DC 20594



WPR26LA222

AIRFRAME EXAMINATION

July 28, 2026

A. ACCIDENT

Location: Death Valley, California
Date: June 17, 2026
Time: 1030 Pacific daylight time
Airplane: Cessna 172, N96FA

B. AIRFRAME EXAMINATION

Investigator: Joshua Cawthra
NTSB
Federal Way, Washington

C. DETAILS OF THE EXAMINATION

Examination of the recovered wreckage was conducted at the facilities of Southwest Aircraft Transportation and Recovery, on July 28, 2026. The wings were removed from the fuselage to facilitate wreckage recovery. The recovery company personnel reported that they actuated the flaps during the wing removal process with no issues noted.

An external battery was connected to the flap motor and the flap jack screw and the jack screw operated in both the up and down directions normally.

The flap switch was intact and functioned normally in all positions (up, 10, 20, and 30°).

No anomalies were noted with the flap system.

Throttle and mixture controls continuity was established from the cockpit controls to their respective engine attach points.

The data card from the upper right card slot in the multi-function display was removed and the data copied for further review.

Submitted by:

Joshua D. Cawthra
Deputy Regional Chief