

# National transportation safety board aircraft accident brief

[Environment](#), [Air](#)



## Accident Summary

The Hendricks Motorsport plane crash occurred on 24 October 2001. The airplane crashed in the mountainous regions in Stuart Virginia killing the crew and passengers aboard. The plane crash occurred after a missed landing on the runway 30 of the Martinsville Blue Ridge Airport (NTSB, 2006). The plane contained two crewmembers and eight passengers who were part of the Hendricks Motorsport Racing team. All the people on the aircraft died in the accident. The plane crashed and exploded into flames after impact. The team was traveling from Concord airport in North Carolina for a racing event.

Information from the FAA records of communications and operations of the flight shows that the plane followed all the right procedures including altitude and headings. However, the problem arose while approaching the Martinsville airport runway (NTSB, 2006). The plane scheduled a landing on runway thirty but failed to do so under the advisement of the controller tower. The controller informed the crew that they were second in line for the runway and initiated a holding pattern that extended to 28 minutes. The flight crew received the message and started 5-mile legs to wait.

The team undertook a five-mile holding pattern by making a right turn and ascent to 4000 ft. The team went on with the holding pattern until the controller cleared them for landing and instructed them to announce their approach to the runway (NTSB, 2006). The crew followed instructions, informed the controller of the inbound approach, and began their descent to the runway. The controller confirmed the approached through the radio

frequency and the crew proceeded with the approach by descending from 3900ft to 1400ft. The plane maintained this attitude for approximately over one minute. It was then that the team announced a missed approach was prompting the controller to ask for confirmation. The crewmembers ceased all communications after confirming the missed approach. The Controller further advised the flight crew to ascend to 4400ft but received no response and lost the radar.

The Bull Mountains of Stuart Virginia were the scene of the crash about 2400ft away from the landing site. Eyewitness reports indicated that the aircraft was operating efficiently before the accident. The engine produced a smooth continuous sound that may have meant idling (NTSB, 2006). Further reports showed that the plane was flying extremely low at a slow velocity. There did not seem to be any challenges to the aircraft's performance at the time. However, it is important to note that there was fog in the atmosphere at the date of the crash. The fog was a factor limiting visibility as it covered the Bull Mountains. Reports indicate the visibility was up to a quarter mile.

A review of the pilot's credentials presented him as qualified. He had an estimated 10, 733 hours of flight with almost 2000 in the Beech aircraft. He was 51 years of age and had a significant amount of experience as a pilot. He had also undergone rigorous training and passed his previous reviews. The first officer had less experience totaling to 2090 hours of flight (NTSB, 2006). However, she was qualified evidenced by her qualifications and past performance. The multiengine plane had passed inspection a few months later with an accumulated flight time of 8079 hours. The plane had a GPS

system with an old database. It also lacked ground proximity detectors that would have warned the pilot when flying at low altitudes. The plane was scheduled for a systems upgrade later in the year. The weather report during the accident indicated cloudy atmosphere with high humidity and patchy fog. A pilot for the plane ahead of the Hendricks's Motorsports plane claimed that the climate under the clouds had relatively high visibility up to 2 miles. However, the weather kept on shifting during the flight.

#### Reference

NTSB, (2006). Accident Investigations – NTSB – National Transportation Safety Board. App. ntsb. gov. Retrieved 15 February 2017, from <https://app. ntsb. gov/investigations/fulltext/AAB0601. html>