



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

Location:	Watsonville, CA	Accident Number:	WPR22FA309
Date & Time:	August 18, 2022, 14:55 Local	Registration:	N49931 (A2); N740WJ (A3)
Aircraft:	Cessna 152 (A2); Cessna 340A (A3)	Injuries:	1 Fatal (A2); 2 Fatal (A3)
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal (A2); Part 91: General aviation - Personal (A3)		

On August 18, 2022, about 1455 Pacific daylight time, a Cessna 152, N49931, and a Cessna 340, N740WJ, were involved in a midair collision near Watsonville, California. Both airplanes were destroyed. The pilot and passenger of N740WJ and the pilot of N49931 were fatally injured. Both aircraft were operated as Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flights.

According to recorded automatic dependent surveillance-broadcast (ADS-B) data and recorded common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF) communications, the Cessna 152 was in the traffic pattern at Watsonville Municipal Airport (WVI) and had completed four touch-and-go landings. The Cessna 340 was northeast of WVI when the pilot reported that he was 10 miles out and planned to descend for a straight in approach to runway 20. About one minute later, the pilot of the Cessna 152 reported that he was on the crosswind leg, then shortly after reported that he was on the downwind leg for runway 20. The pilot of the Cessna 340 reported that he was 3 miles out and straight in for runway 20. Shortly after, the Cessna 340 pilot reported he was 1 mile out and straight in for the runway. He further stated that he was looking for traffic on left base. The Cessna 152 pilot reported that he did see the Cessna 340 and that it was behind him. The Cessna 152 pilot further stated that he was going to go around, "because you are coming up on me pretty quick."



Figure 1. View of the two airplanes' ADS-B flight track data.

Multiple witnesses reported hearing the two pilots communicating over the CTAF, and others heard and observed the two airplanes collide. One witness stated that he was flying overhead of the airport at 1,300 ft mean seal level (msl) when he heard the two pilots on the CTAF. He focused his attention on the final approach path and observed the Cessna 340 “on the Cessna 152’s tail.” The Cessna 340 then banked to the right and its left wing struck the Cessna 152. He then observed both airplanes descend to the ground. Another witness who was in her office took a photo of the two airplanes as they approached the airport. The Cessna 340 appeared to be in a steep right bank and the Cessna 152 appeared to be in a slight nose-low attitude.



Figure 2. Image captured by a witness.

The Cessna 152 came to rest on the airport property about 1,200 feet northeast of the approach end of runway 20. The left wing, from the strut outboard, separated from the airplane and came to rest about 500 feet northeast of the main wreckage. The left horizontal stabilizer and elevator separated and came to rest about 380 feet northeast of the main wreckage. Two small sections of the Cessna 340's left tip tank was located near the Cessna 152 wreckage.

The Cessna 340 came to rest in a hangar located on the southeast side of the airport. All major components of the Cessna 340 were located in the debris area.

Both aircraft were recovered and secured in a storage facility pending further examination.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information (A2)

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N49931
Model/Series:	152	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:			
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Pilot school (141)
Operator Designator Code:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information (A3)

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N740WJ
Model/Series:	340A	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:			
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Designator Code:			

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:		Condition of Light:	
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KWVI, 162 ft msl	Observation Time:	14:53 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	21 °C / 13 °C
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	9 knots / , 210°
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility:	10 miles
Altimeter Setting:	29.96 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	
Departure Point:		Destination:	

Wreckage and Impact Information (A2)

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	36.939824, -121.78746 (est)

Wreckage and Impact Information (A3)

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	36.939824, -121.78746 (est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Salazar, Fabian

Additional Participating Persons: Peter Basilli; Textron Aviation Int.; Wichita, KS
Michael Schaadt; Federal Aviation Administration; San Jose, CA
Drew Connely; Federal Aviation Administration; San Jose, CA
Rayvon Williams; Airport Director Watsonville

Note: