



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

Location:	Rifle, CO	Accident Number:	CEN22FA240
Date & Time:	June 9, 2022, 17:35 Local	Registration:	N249SD
Aircraft:	HPH SPOL SRO GLASFLUGEL 304 MS	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

On June 9, 2022, at 1737 mountain daylight time, a HPH SPOL SRO Glasflugel 304MS powered glider, N249SD, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident at the Rifle Garfield County Airport (RIL), Garfield, Colorado. The pilot was fatally injured. The glider was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations*(CFR)Part 91 personal flight.

According to ADS-B flight tracking the flight originated about 1200 mdt from RIL. The glider proceeded in a generally westward direction for about 160 miles before turning back eastward. At 1712, the glider was about 45 miles north of RIL at 14,300 ft msl, where it turned to the south toward RIL. At 1735, the glider was about 2 miles west of RIL 7,600 ft msl, and began a left turn onto a downwind traffic pattern leg for runway 26. The published field elevation for RIL was 5337 ft msl. When the glider was on the downwind leg, about abeam the midfield location, it began descending rapidly. The descent rate during the last 47 seconds of the flight was calculated to be in excess of 1,600 ft/min.

The RIL airport was an uncontrolled airport and communications were conducted on a common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF). CTAF at RIL was recorded and copies of the communications were provided for the investigation. On the recording, the pilot of the accident glider reported "heavy sink going for left downwind two six". There was no time index on the CTAF recording provided.

A video surveillance recording from RIL captured the accident. The camera was positioned about 1,000 ft east and 400 ft north of the runway 26 approach threshold. The camera was positioned to capture the approach end of runway 26 with the center of the view oriented about 150 degrees magnetic. In the video the glider can be seen descending in a left wing low attitude and striking the ground at time index 1737:49. During this portion of the flight, the glider appears to be travelling in a northeasterly direction consistent with the ADS-B track data. About the time the glider is descending, a dust cloud appears in the background travelling in the same direction as the glider, consistent with a strong tailwind. The surveillance video provided showed virga forming in the clouds above the airport about 12 minutes after the accident.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	HPH SPOL SRO	Registration:	N249SD
Model/Series:	GLASFLUGEL 304 MS	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Amateur Built:			
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Designator Code:			

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	VMC	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KRIL,5525 ft msl	Observation Time:	17:53 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	33° C / -2° C
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	5 knots / 16 knots, 290°
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility:	10 miles
Altimeter Setting:	30.01 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Departure Point:	Rifle, CO	Destination:	Rifle, CO

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	39.526607,-107.72798

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Brannen, John
Additional Participating Persons:	
Note:	