



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Piermont, NH	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ERA21LA290
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	July 15, 2021, 19:45 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N2925L
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Experimental Boland	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal, 1 Minor, 3 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Aerial observation		

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On July 15, 2021, about 1945 eastern daylight time, an amateur-built balloon registered as N2925L, a Cameron Balloon 0-105, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Piermont, New Hampshire. The pilot was fatally injured, one passenger received minor injuries and three passengers were not injured. The balloon was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 sightseeing flight.

According to a passenger, the balloon departed Post Mills Airport (2B9), Post Mills, Vermont, with the pilot and four passengers about 1830 and flew northeast along the Connecticut River toward Bradford, Vermont. The balloon was aloft about 45 minutes when the pilot reported the pilot light on the burner was not lit. He changed to a new propane bottle but could not locate the striker to relight the burner. The balloon had started to descend while the pilot searched the balloon basket for the striker. He did not locate the original striker but did locate the backup in the supply pocket. The balloon had descended toward the ground by this point and the pilot had re-lit the pilot light but could not get the balloon to climb before impacting a field 2.25 mile south of Bradford, Vermont. One passenger and the pilot were thrown from the basket upon impacting the field. The balloon then started to rise, but the pilot's foot was trapped between the balloon attach rope and the basket frame. The pilot untangled his foot but remained hanging below the basket for an estimated 1.25 miles before falling to a field near the Connecticut river. The remaining passengers contacted the balloon ground support personnel via a handheld radio and received instructions on how to operate the balloon controls in preparation for landing. The balloon traveled about 3.45 miles from the ejection site before it impacted trees and landed in a wooded area.

Examination of the balloon, basket, and propane system revealed the balloon was not manufactured by Cameron Balloon US. The basket and burner were manufactured by Galaxy Balloons, the propane gas tanks were manufactured by Worthington and the balloon (envelope) was an experimental envelope built by the pilot.

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Experimental	<b>Registration:</b>	N2925L
<b>Model/Series:</b>	Boland	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Balloon
<b>Amateur Built:</b>	Yes		
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>			

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	VMC	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	LEB,570 ft msl	<b>Observation Time:</b>	19:53 Local
<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	23 Nautical Miles	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	23°C / 19°C
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	4 knots / , 160°
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility:</b>	10 miles
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.97 inches Hg	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Post Mills, VT (2B9)	<b>Destination:</b>	Piermont, NH

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	1 Minor, 3 None	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal, 1 Minor, 3 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	44.007327,-72.091022

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Wentz, Peter
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Frank Cartier; FAA FSDO; Portland, ME
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.