



**OFFICE OF THE
CHIEF CORONER
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

Media Release

May 28, 2019

Heather Jones, Chief Coroner

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Yukon Coroner's Service was advised that an aircraft had gone down shortly after take-off from the Erik Nielson International airport in Whitehorse shortly after 5:30 pm on Monday, May 27, 2019, with two souls on board. The Whitehorse detachment of the RCMP, along with Whitehorse Fire Department, the Airport Rescue Firefighters (ARF) and Wildland Fire Management all attended the scene. The wreckage was located approximately 600 meters off the end of the runway 14 in a treed area. Both occupants were confirmed deceased at the scene.

Initial investigation reveals that two males had been flying a 1952 Cessna 170B from Minnesota en route to Anchorage and then Palmer, Alaska. They had left Minnesota on Saturday, May 25 after purchasing the aircraft. They arrived in Whitehorse from Watson Lake at 4:10 pm Monday and had departed the runway at 5:29 pm.

The occupants are identified as 56 year old Charles Eric BENSON of Palmer, Alaska and 58 year old Jeffrey Brian BABCOCK of Wasilla Alaska. It is believed that Mr. BABCOCK was piloting the aircraft at the time of the incident. The aircraft was registered to Mr. BENSON.

Investigators from the Transportation and Safety Board of Canada (TSBC) arrived on the scene just before noon today. Yukon Coroner's Service continues our investigation in partnership with the TSBC and with assistance from the Whitehorse RCMP and the Forensic Identification Service.

Yukon Coroner's Service extends our condolences to the families of Mr. BABCOCK and Mr. BENSON.