



Issued: July 14, 2022

Preliminary Report HWY22MH006

This is preliminary information, subject to change, and may contain errors. Any errors in this report will be corrected when the final report has been completed.

Centerline Crossover and Head-on Crash

Andrews, TX
March 15, 2022

About 8:17 p.m. central daylight time, a head-on crash occurred between a southbound 2007 Dodge 2500 pickup truck and a northbound 2017 Ford transit van (towing a 2019 Salvation single-axle, enclosed cargo trailer) on Farm-to-Market Road (FM) 1788 at mile marker 10.547, approximately 0.72 miles north of State Highway 115 in Andrews County, Texas. The posted speed limit in this area was 75 mph.

The pickup truck was occupied by a driver and a passenger; the van was occupied by a college golf team consisting of a 26-year-old male coach and eight team members from the University of the Southwest, located in Hobbs, New Mexico. The van was returning to Hobbs from a golf tournament in Midland, Texas, when the pickup truck crossed into the northbound lane and collided head-on with the van. Both vehicles caught on fire and were destroyed. (See figure 1.) Both pickup truck occupants, the coach, and six students in the van were fatally injured. The two remaining students in the van were seriously injured.

DNA testing results provided to the NTSB by the Texas Department of Public Safety have confirmed the identity of the driver of the pickup truck as the 38-year-old male, correcting initial reports that the 13-year-old male passenger had been operating the truck at the time of the crash. In addition to the DNA test results, NTSB postcrash toxicological testing revealed the presence of methamphetamine in the pickup truck driver's blood.

In the area of the collision, FM 1788 consisted of one northbound and one southbound travel lane, each approximately 12 feet wide. Raised pavement markers were spaced at 40-foot intervals along the painted centerline. The raised pavement markers, which had reflectorized surfaces on both sides, were intended to augment the lane markings delineating the travel lanes. Near the crash location, the roadway was straight, and no highway lighting was installed. (See figure 2.)



Figure 1. Damage to pickup truck (left) and transit van (right) from impact and postcrash fire.

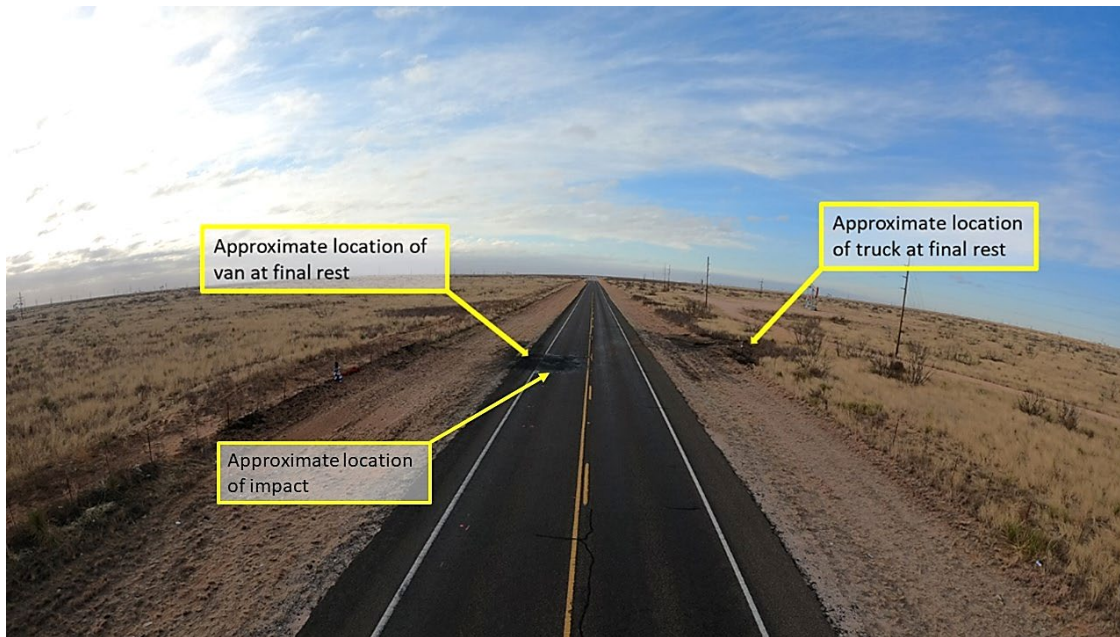


Figure 2. Southbound view of FM 1788 showing the north- and southbound lanes near the crash site, and the locations of the transit van and pickup truck at final rest.

Working with the NTSB investigation are the following parties:

- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
- Texas Department of Transportation
- Texas Department of Public Safety

To date, the investigation has not found evidence of a sudden or rapid loss of tire air pressure or any other indicators of catastrophic failure of the pickup truck's front left tire. However, all aspects of the crash remain under investigation while the NTSB determines the probable cause, with the intent of issuing safety recommendations to prevent similar events.