NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
Office of Aviation Safety

ACCIDENT/ FIELD EXAM

A. ACCIDENT   CEN21FA252

Location: Darlington, IN
Date: June 6, 2021
Time: 1020 Eastern Daylight Time (CDT)
Operator: Lift Academy, LLC
Aircraft: Diamond DA 40 NG
Registration: N853L

B.   PARTICIPANTS

Name   Craig Hatch, IIC
                National Transportation Safety Board
                Denver, CO

Participant: Cory Irwin, Terry Dill
                FAA
                Indianapolis, IN

Participant: Edward Bagden, Jim Boothe, Timothy Barker
                Lift Academy, LLC
                Indianapolis, IN

C. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

1.0   Accident Site

Aircraft impacted young corn field. Ground scars and wreckage were consistent with the airplane's impact with terrain in a slight right wing low, nose down attitude. The main wreckage was near its initial impact point on a heading of about 37°. The wreckage was highly fragmented with scattered debris that extended for about 75 yards. All major components of the airplane were

confirmed on site. A slight smell of fuel was also present, along with a blight present on vegetation along the debris path.

1.1 Fuselage
The composite fuselage was highly fractured, along with both wings and empennage. Airplane had fixed landing gear.

1.2 Cockpit
Cockpit largely destroyed by impact. Data card from G1000 unit was removed for download.

1.3 Flight Controls
Established continuity form the left and right ailerons to the control stick. Trim line connected to rear tab. Elevator push rod broken at rod end bearing. Rudder control continuity established with cables connected at rudder and at pedals. Breaks were consistent with impact and/or broom straw type failure.
Flap actuator – retracted, flaps in retracted position.

1.4 Survivability
Seatbelt air bags deployed, laying in wreckage.

2.0 Engine Examination

Austro E4-A, diesel engine, impact damage
Limited on-site exam, removed engine's EECU for download

3.0   Propeller Examination
3 bladed MT prop
Fragments of each of three blades were located