Issued: 4/10/2025 Preliminary Report HWY25MH005

This information is preliminary and subject to change.

Multivehicle Work Zone Crash on Interstate 35

Austin, Texas
March 13, 2025

On Thursday, March 13, 2025, about 11:20 p.m. central daylight time, a 2016 Volvo VNL truck-tractor operated by ZBN Transport LLC, in combination with a 2022 CIMC Intermodal Equipment semitrailer, was traveling south in the center lane on Interstate 35 (I-35) near mile marker 245.4 in Austin, Travis County, Texas.

The combination vehicle was traveling in a long-term work zone and encountered a traffic queue that had formed because of lane closures that were about 0.4 miles south within the work zone. The driver of the combination vehicle did not stop as he approached the slowing traffic ahead and collided with the rear of a 2013 Volkswagen Jetta passenger car and a 2006 Chevrolet Silverado pickup truck at the end of the queue. The combination vehicle continued south into the queue for about 0.1 miles, causing 13 other vehicles in the queue to be involved in the crash before coming to a stop on the left shoulder of the roadway. At this location, I-35 is a divided, six-lane roadway composed of three northbound and three southbound traffic lanes. A 2.2-mile-long short-term work zone was established within the long-term work zone for an overnight pavement resurfacing project, which began at 9:00 p.m. on March 13, 2025, and was scheduled to end at 3:30 a.m. on March 14, 2025. The speed limit along this section of I-35 was originally 70 mph, but the work zone speed limit was lowered to 60 mph.

As a result of the crash, all four occupants in the passenger car and one passenger in the pickup truck were fatally injured. The other two occupants of the pickup truck and the other occupants in the crash-involved vehicles reported various

injuries ranging from minor to serious. The driver of the combination vehicle was uninjured.

Aerial view of the crash site on I-35 showing the combination vehicle at final rest position. Other crash-involved vehicles can be seen within the roadway behind the combination vehicle. (Source: Austin Police Department; annotated by NTSB)

Parties to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigation are:

- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
- Texas Department of Transportation
- Austin Police Department

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.