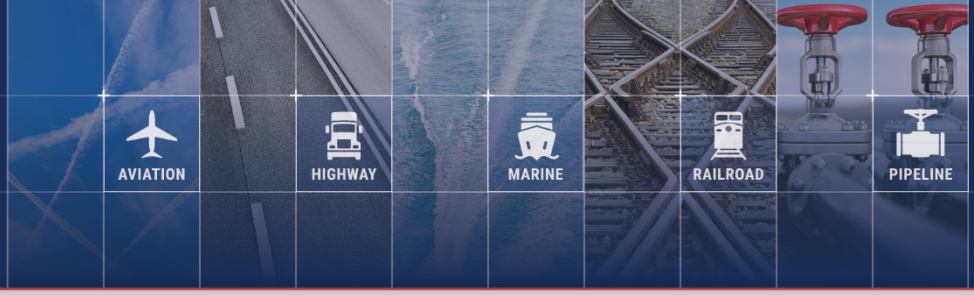

Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Walbridge, Ohio	**Accident Number:**	ERA25LA321
Date & Time:	August 22, 2025, 19:45 Local	**Registration:**	N591KY
Aircraft:	AIR FLY BALONISMO E INFLAVEIS AF-SS-94	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:	Miscellaneous/other	**Injuries:**	4 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot of the hot air balloon planned for a local sightseeing flight that departed and returned to the same airport. During the flight, the pilot realized that the balloon would not be able to return to the airport as planned, so he selected a field for an off-airport landing. During the final portion of the landing approach, one of the passengers alerted the pilot to the presence of a previously unseen powerline. Due to the balloon's close proximity to the ground and the powerline, the pilot elected to vent the envelope and allow it to drape over the power line rather than risk the parts of the balloon between the envelope and the basket contacting the powerline. After touchdown, the envelope and the upper portion of one (steel) riser cable contacted two wires. The pilot heard a pop and saw an arc, which ultimately resulted in substantial damage to the riser cable, a quick link connector, and the envelope. The pilot and passengers were not injured. The pilot reported that there were no preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures of the balloon that would have precluded normal operation.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The balloon pilot's failure to see and avoid powerlines during an off-field airport landing.

Findings

Personnel issues	Identification/recognition - Pilot
Personnel issues	Monitoring environment - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Approach	Miscellaneous/other (Defining event)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial; Flight instructor	**Age:**	53,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	**Seat Occupied:**	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Balloon	**Restraint Used:**	None
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	**Second Pilot Present:**	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine	**Toxicology Performed:**	
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Without waivers/limitations	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	May 7, 2025
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	April 13, 2025
Flight Time:	11000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 7 hours (Total, this make and model), 9500 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 81 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 17 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	AIR FLY BALONISMO E INFLAVEIS	**Registration:**	N591KY
Model/Series:	AF-SS-94	**Aircraft Category:**	Balloon
Year of Manufacture:	2025	**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Balloon	**Serial Number:**	LP2025-03
Landing Gear Type:	None; Other launch/recovery system	**Seats:**	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 1, 2025 Condition	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	1984 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		**Engines:**	0
Airframe Total Time:		**Engine Manufacturer:**	
ELT:	Not installed	**Engine Model/Series:**	
Registered Owner:	On file	**Rated Power:**	
Operator:	On file	**Operating Certificate(s) Held:**	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	**Condition of Light:**	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	TOL,674 ft msl	**Distance from Accident Site:**	15 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	19:52 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	275°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 4800 ft AGL	**Visibility**	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	3 knots / None	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	None / None
Wind Direction:	310°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	26°C / 15°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Toledo, OH (TDZ)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	None
Destination:	Toledo, OH (TDZ)	**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:	19:16 Local	**Type of Airspace:**	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	TOLEDO EXEC TDZ	**Runway Surface Type:**	
Airport Elevation:	622 ft msl	**Runway Surface Condition:**	Dry
Runway Used:		**IFR Approach:**	None
Runway Length/Width:		**VFR Approach/Landing:**	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	3 None	**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:		**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	4 None	**Latitude, Longitude:**	41.566168,-83.465816(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Boggs, Daniel
Additional Participating Persons:	Robert Karman; FAA/FSDO; Clevland, OH
Original Publish Date:	November 20, 2025
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=200882

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, "accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties … and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person" (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB's statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available here.