

2 Student Pilots Killed in 'Devastating' Midair Crash While Practicing Takeoffs and Landings

The incident occurred at a flying school in Canada on July 8

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Two student pilots have been killed in a midair collision involving their single-engine planes in Canada.

The crash occurred at around 8:45 a.m. local time on Tuesday, July 8, according to a [press release](#) from the Steinbach Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The pilots were training at Harv's Air pilot training school south of Steinbeck in the Canadian province of Manitoba, the [Associated Press](#) and regional outlets [CTV New](#) and [CityNews Montreal](#) reported.

Adam Penner, the owner of Harv's Air, said that the student pilots were "practicing their takeoffs and landings" when their Cessna aircrafts collided roughly 1,300 ft. from the runway in a field, according to the outlets.

"There was some sort of communication issue where they weren't seeing each other," Penner told CityNews Montreal. "They were on approach, and they collided somewhere on the approach."

The pilots were found deceased at the scene, the RCMP confirmed in their press release.

At the time of the collision, they were flying a four-seater Cessna 172 airplane and a two-seater Cessna 152 plane, [CBC News](#) reported.

The police, fire department and emergency medical services responded to the scene, per CityNews Montreal.

In a press conference, a RCMP spokesperson declined to identify the victims, saying, "I don't have that information," according to the AP.

One of the students killed was later identified as 20-year-old Savanna May Royes, who was training to be a pilot like her father, the family confirmed to CBC News. "Savanna's faith and laughter will forever touch everyone who was lucky enough to have known her, during her short life," they said.

Footage from the scene showed a trail of smoke rising in the air from the crash in a field on a private property, per *CTV News*.

A private Cessna 172 airplane.
Credit: NNehring/Getty

RCMP hasn't shared details of the cause of crash at this time. During their press conference, a spokesperson said it was "too early" to rule out criminal charges, adding, "This is still evolving."

"The members are still on scene, so the investigation is ongoing," they explained.

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Witness Nathaniel Plett told *CTV News*, “[The crash] sounded like an airplane revving its engine ... and then the propeller ...[after] a couple of thuds and then it stopped. We heard a bang ... and saw the smoke coming up right away.”

In a [statement](#), the Transportation Safety Board of Canada confirmed that it was investigating the incident.

PEOPLE has contacted Harv’s Air flying school and RCMP for comment.

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