

Regional Jet crash in Lexington, USA - Various sources



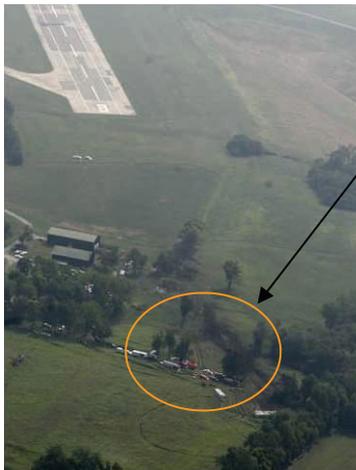
On August 27, 2006 at 06:07 local time, a Comair CRJ-100ER on a scheduled passenger flight to Atlanta crashed on takeoff from Lexington's Blue Grass Airport, Kentucky. It was dark and an hour before sunrise with light rain. At 6:05am the flight was cleared for takeoff on the longer runway 22. The flight crew reportedly taxied the aircraft onto the shorter runway 26 in error, and began their takeoff roll. The CRJ was unable to attain sufficient speed for takeoff on the short runway and became airborne briefly before stalling, crashing into a field, and impacting trees about ¼ mile off the departure end of runway 26. A large post-crash fire engulfed the aircraft killing 49 of the 50 onboard. The copilot who is the lone survivor was at the controls but it was the captain who taxied the plane into position for take off. The fuselage was largely intact when rescuers reached the wreckage.

According to Comair President, the three-member flight crew aboard the plane was experienced and had been flying that airplane for some time, and the plane's maintenance was up to date.

Blue Grass Airport had been closed to flights the previous weekend for runway repaving but reopened Aug. 20. NOTAM of August 25 suggests the operating condition of certain runway lights may be in question. This CRJ needed runway length in excess of 5000ft for takeoff. This airport offers crossing runways: 7,003 by 150-foot Runway 22 and a 3,500 by 75-foot Runway 26 mainly for daylight general aviation. The taxi from terminal to runway is short and the shorter Runway 26 would have been the first reached by the aircraft en route to 22(See the picture)

NTSB is investigating the accident and has acquired the CVR and DFDR. The NTSB's last record of a CRJ crash was on November 21, 2004, when a China Eastern-Yunnan Airlines Bombardier crashed shortly after takeoff. The 6 crew members and 47 passengers on the CRJ-200 were killed, and there were two fatalities on the ground.

The crash marks the end of what has been called the "safest period in aviation history" in the United States. There has not been a major crash since Nov. 12, 2001, when American Airlines Flight 587 plunged into a residential neighborhood in Queens, N.Y., killing 265 people, including five on the ground.



Crash site

