Beat: Technology

Charter plane carrying hikers crashes in Canada, killing 2

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USPA News - A small charter plane carrying a pilot and five hikers crashed Friday in a remote area on the west coast of Vancouver Island in British Columbia, killing two people and injuring the four survivors, Canadian officials said after an hours-long search came to an end. The fixed-wing DeHavilland Beaver aircraft sent out a distress call at approximately 10:30 a.m. local time, approximately three minutes after it took off from Hesquiaht Lake near the settlement of Hot Springs Cove on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

Contact was lost shortly afterwards. Authorities immediately launched a major rescue operation, involving multiple aircraft dispatched by the Joint Rescue Coordination Center (JRCC), a vessel from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) West Coast Marine Section, and ground units from the Tofino RCMP Detachment. Police spokesman Cpl. Darren Lagan said it took about 5.5 hours before search crews located the float plane, which was found to have crashed approximately 3 nautical miles (5.5 kilometers) from Hesquiaht Lake. He said two adults were found dead while four survivors were taken to hospitals on Vancouver Island, suffering from varying degrees of injury. "The identities of the deceased and survivors will not be released at this time," Lagan said. "RCMP Officers will secure the crash site overnight, and assist our partner agencies in the days ahead as they conduct their respective investigations. Next of kin notifications continue at this hour." The float plane had been chartered by five hikers from Air Nootka, a small charter airline which is based on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The aircraft was scheduled to fly to the village of Gold River, where Air Nootka is also based, but the airline did not immediately provide other details. The cause of Friday`s accident was not yet known, but it occurred during unfavorable weather conditions which included rain and limited visibility. The BC Coroners Service, the RCMP, and the Transportation Safety Board of Canada (TSB) will investigate the circumstances surrounding the crash.

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