

**NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
Office of Aviation Safety
Washington, DC 20594**

August 29, 2011

ATC GROUP CHAIRMAN'S FACTUAL REPORT

CEN11FA468

A. AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

Location: Rising Sun, Indiana
Date: July 9, 2011
Time: 0924 Eastern Daylight Time / 1324 Coordinated Universal Time
Aircraft: N42333, Robinson R44 helicopter

B. AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL GROUP

Mr. Scott J. Dunham
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Charles Olvis
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Todd Luepker
Federal Aviation Administration
Washington, D.C.

C. SUMMARY

On July 9, 2011, about 0924 eastern daylight time, a Robinson R44, N42333, sustained substantial damage when it impacted trees and terrain near Rising Sun, Indiana. The pilot was fatally injured. The helicopter was owned and operated by the pilot as a personal flight under the provisions of the 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91. The flight departed from the Georgetown Scott County Airport (27K), Georgetown, Kentucky, about 0900, and was en route to the Anderson Municipal Airport (AID), Anderson, Indiana. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. No flight plan was filed.

The 0913 surface weather observation at the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG), Covington, Kentucky, located about 13 nautical miles northeast of the accident site was: wind 090 degrees at 6 knots; 4 miles visibility; haze; scattered clouds at 1,100 feet; temperature 24 degrees Celsius (C); dew point 21 degrees C; altimeter 29.99 inches of mercury.

The accident site was near the top of a ridgeline about 0.3 miles west of the Ohio River. Witnesses who lived near the accident site reported observing dense ground fog along the river and near the accident site at the time of the accident.

D. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The air traffic control group met at CVG Airport Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) on July 19, 2011. We received a briefing on the accident from Mr. George Cole, Operations Manager, and other members of the CVG ATCT management team. Following the briefing, the group toured the TRACON operations room to observe the control positions occupied by the controllers and supervisor involved. Following the operations room visit, we reviewed training materials and other facility documentation related to the services provided to N42333. We concluded the first day with interviews of Mr. Cole and Mr. Ralph Rud, the front-line manager in charge of the TRACON at the time of the accident. On July 20, we returned to the facility to review additional data, interview the two controllers involved in handling N42333 at the time of the accident, and to discuss our findings with the TRACON management.

1. History of Flight

The pilot of N42333 first contacted CVG TRACON at 0911 requesting clearance through the CVG class B airspace with VFR radar service to Anderson, Indiana. The controller instructed the pilot to squawk code 0432, and at 0912 advised the pilot of radar contact 25 miles south of CVG. The pilot stated that he was proceeding direct to AID on a course of 339 degrees. At 0919, the pilot reported that he needed to descend because, "...I'm getting into too many clouds." The controller approved the VFR descent, and instructed the pilot to maintain VFR at or below 2000 feet.

According to recorded radar data, the last target for N42333 was seen at 0924. The controller advised the pilot, "...radar services lost" (sic) at 0925. The controllers handling the aircraft notified their supervisor of the loss of contact. Over the next few minutes, the sector controllers and supervisor attempted various methods of contacting the pilot including relayed communications through a nearby airliner without success. The supervisor checked with adjacent ATC facilities to see if they had any contact with the aircraft, and with area law enforcement agencies to determine if there had been any reports of an accident. He also located the pilot's telephone number and left a message at the pilot's residence. The supervisor did not initiate any official search and rescue activities.

At 1313, the pilot's wife contacted the facility and reported that he was overdue. The supervisor then initiated formal search and rescue procedures, notifying Indianapolis Air Route Traffic Control Center of the overdue aircraft. About two hours later, the facility asked an itinerant helicopter to look for N42333 in the area of the last radar contact, and shortly afterward the pilot reported locating wreckage in a tree. First responders were directed to the site, and at 1615 the Ohio County, Indiana, sheriff's department reported locating the wreckage and the deceased pilot.

2. Radar Data

Radar data for this incident was obtained from the ASR-9 radar system located at CVG airport. Figure 1 shows the aircraft's track superimposed on a Cincinnati Terminal Area Chart. Figure 2 is a close-up view of the end of the flight.

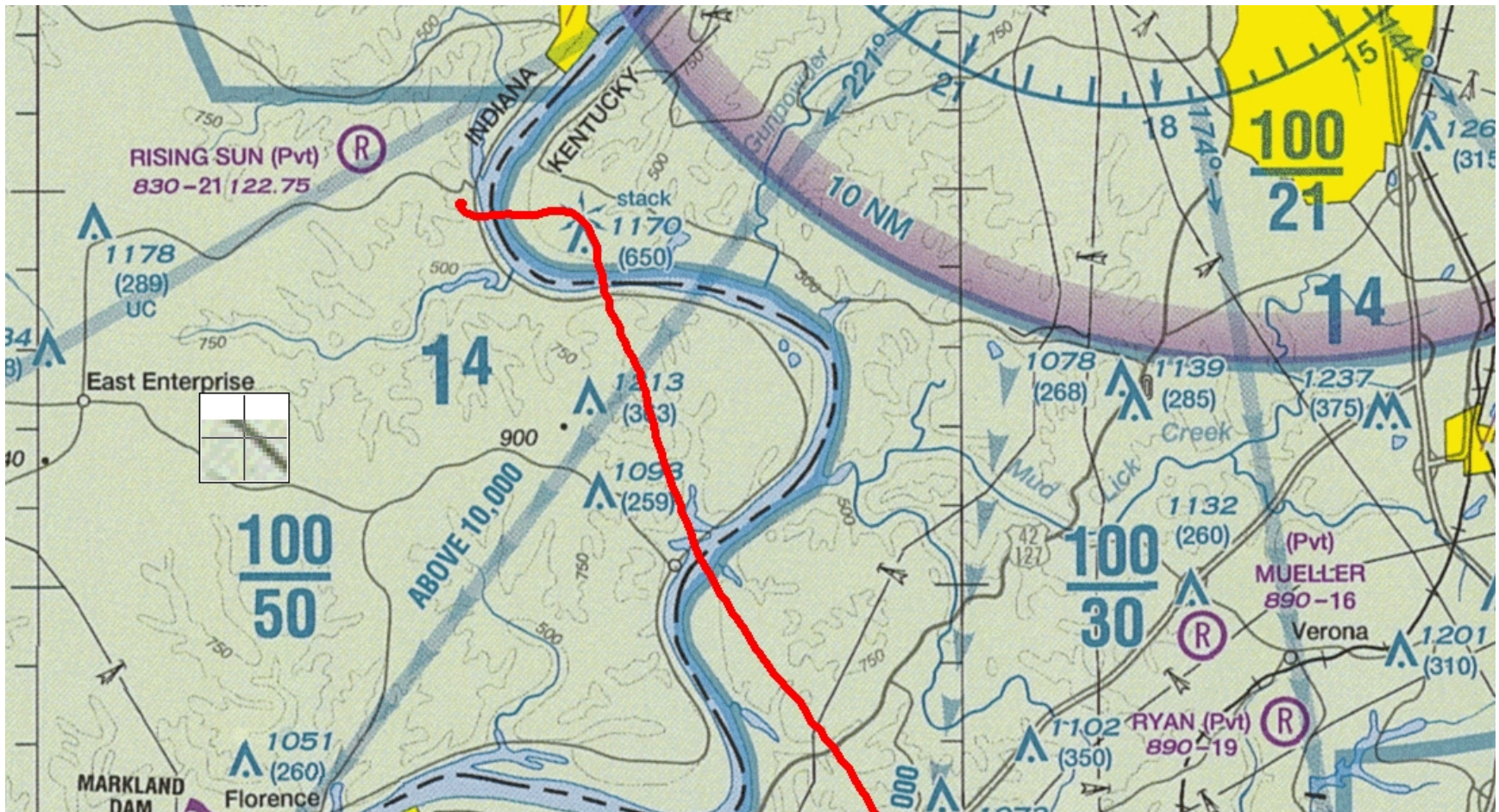


Figure 1 - N42333 flight track on the Cincinnati Terminal Area Chart. The accident site is at the northwest end of the track.

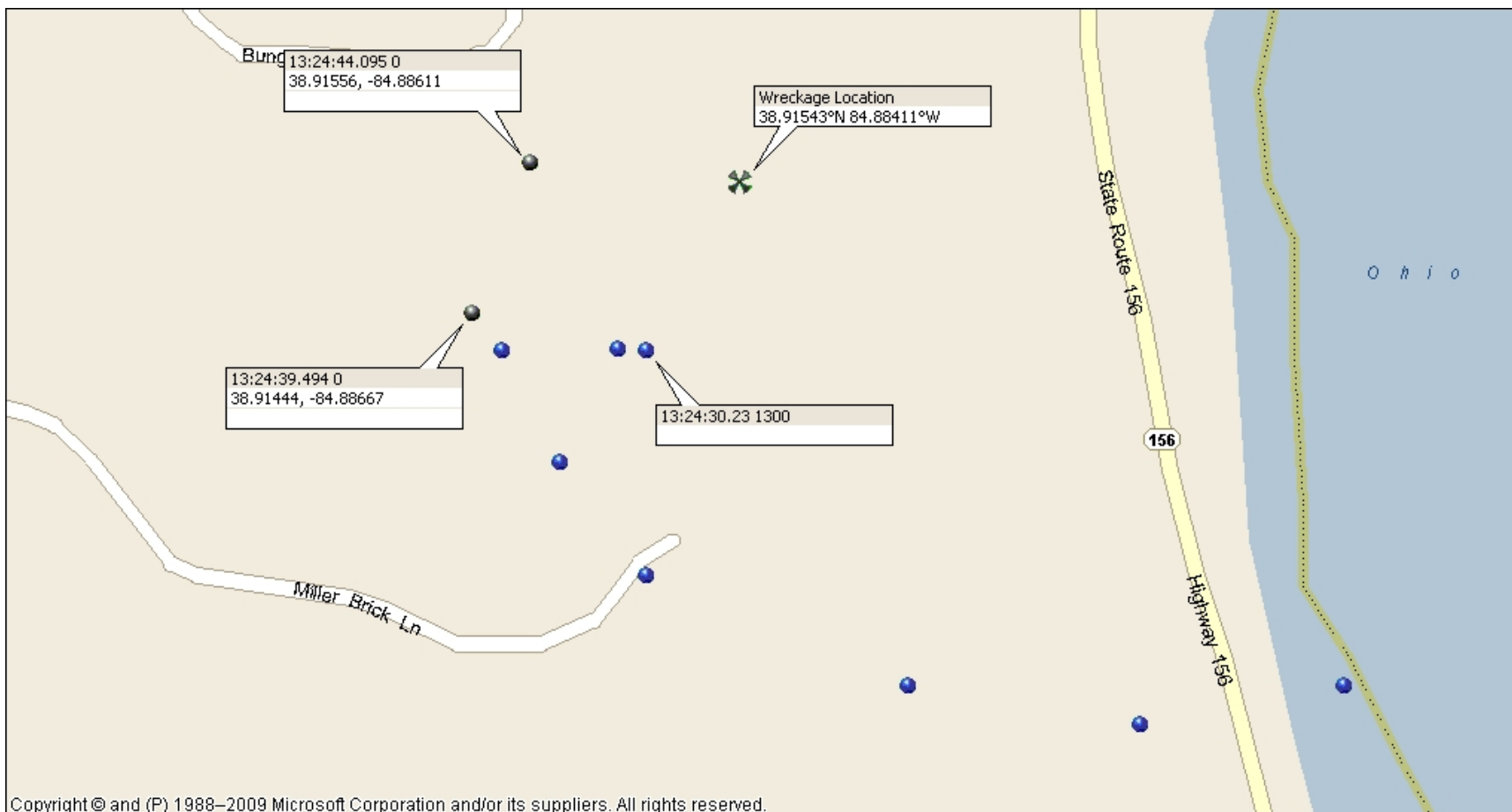


Figure 2 – View of radar data near the accident site. Blue dots are transponder targets.
Black dots are primary targets. Times shown are UTC (Fours later than local time.)

3. Personnel Interviews

George Cole

CVG Operations Manager

Mr. Cole began working for the FAA on December 7, 1980. He was first assigned to the Meridian, Mississippi, TRACON, followed by assignment to Memphis ATCT/TRACON where he was a controller, staff specialist, and temporary supervisor. He came to CVG in 1987 as a front-line manager, and has been an operations manager/support manager at CVG since 1990. Mr. Cole was present in the facility on the day of the accident because there was a NASCAR race that evening and CVG was expecting extra traffic.

Mr. Cole stated that front-line managers receive annual training on how to respond to accidents, both on their own and as part of the training and refresher process for controllers-in-charge. This includes training on both the accident / incident paperwork provided in an envelope at the supervisor's desk and the contents of the emergency information binder provided for supervisory/CIC use. Mr. Cole also recalled a conversation/briefing from Mark Olsen [FAA headquarters search and rescue manager] that he received 18 months to two years ago regarding SAR notification. The training provided on accident handling and search-and-rescue notifications is mostly mechanical, involving which forms to complete and who to call, not about judgment in identifying situations where search and rescue might be needed.

Mr. Cole has only spoken once with Mr. Rud since the accident occurred. They discussed how the notifications had been handled and how it could have been done better. He said that Mr. Rud seemed to be somewhat upset and thought the post-accident actions could have been handled better.

Mr. Cole said that he first became aware of the accident when he came into the TRACON and Mr. Rud told him about the actions that had been taken following the loss of contact with the helicopter, including that Mr. Rud had left a phone message at the pilot's residence. No SAR activities were in progress at that time. Mr. Cole stated that he did not intervene in the process or direct any additional actions, but in retrospect he said he was bothered about that and "...probably should have." Indianapolis Center, the Domestic Events Network, and the Regional Operations Center were all notified only after the pilot's wife called and reported that she was unable to locate him.

After establishing that the pilot was overdue, Mr. Cole reviewed radar data for the flight and noted the unusual maneuvers and loss of speed at the end of the recorded track. He provided the last observed position to Mr. Rud. Mr. Rud then had controllers solicit assistance from a helicopter engaged in shuttle service for the NASCAR race. The helicopter went to the area of the reported accident, and located the tail boom of the accident helicopter in the trees. The helicopter reported the location of the wreckage and stayed on scene until a nearby Civil Air Patrol (CAP) aircraft was able to respond and assume SAR responsibilities. The CAP aircraft coordinated with ground search teams and directed them to the site of the accident. Later, a helicopter air ambulance landed

near the crash site, and on departure reported to CVG air traffic controllers that the accident pilot was deceased.

Since the accident, the facility has put out a read-and-initial briefing item to all air traffic control personnel directing that supervisory personnel be notified any time there is a suspected loss of an aircraft. On August 8, there will be a meeting of all supervisors to discuss the accident and the supervisory response to it, and before the end of August, supervisors will conduct face-to-face briefings with their controllers to discuss how to handle situations like this one. The quality assurance office will also be providing refresher training to all controllers on the relevant parts of the Air Traffic Control handbook.

Mr. Cole noted that the developmental controller on the Bearcat position had only recently moved to that training team and was assigned to new instructors. Consequently, his most recent training time has consisted of simulation problems and familiarization training on the live position.

In closing, Mr. Cole stated that his presence in the operating quarters around the time of the accident may have been a distraction to Mr. Rud, because it is unusual for an operations manager to be present on Saturday.

Ralph Rud

Front Line Manager

Before coming to the FAA, Mr. Rud was a United States Air Force tower controller at Holloman Air Force Base for 3 ½ years. He began working for the FAA on June 6, 1988, at the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City. After completing academy training, he was assigned to the Cincinnati Municipal Airport - Lunken Field ATCT, where he completed facility training on August 23, 1988. Mr. Rud transferred to CVG on April 19, 1992, and became fully certified on August 30, 1993. Mr. Rud became a supervisor at CVG in August of 2006. His immediate supervisor was Mr. George Cole.

Mr. Rud normally worked on Tuesday and Wednesday from 0600 to 1600, and on Friday and Saturday from 1230 to 2230; although on the day of the accident he worked from 0700 to 1700 at the request of Mr. Cole. The schedule change was in support of a NASCAR race being held in Sparta, Kentucky, and the facility expected an unusual amount of general aviation traffic to operate in and out of CVG. Mr. Cole expected helicopters to take race drivers from CVG to the Sparta, Kentucky, raceway, and wanted more supervisory coverage during the event.

Mr. Rud stated that on the day of the accident he was working at the supervisor's position inside the TRACON. Everything was normal, with no fatigue or other personal issues affecting his performance. He indicated there were no equipment outages or other unusual conditions in the TRACON facility.

Mr. Rud became aware that there was a problem involving N42333 when the developmental controller working the Bearcat sector position, Mr. Talbott, informed him

that there had been a loss of radio and radar contact with the helicopter. Mr. Rud stated Mr. Talbott had informed him almost immediately after the loss had occurred, and had pointed out the approximate last known position of N42333. Mr. Talbott told Mr. Rud that N42333 was approved to transition the Cincinnati Class Bravo airspace from the south to the northwest at or below 3000. Sometime later, N42333 had requested lower to remain clear of clouds, and Mr. Talbott had approved a VFR descent to maintain at or below 2000 feet. Shortly after approving the descent, Mr. Talbott simultaneously lost radar and communications with N42333.

Mr. Rud asked Mr. Talbott if he attempted to raise N42333 on frequency 121.5 (guard), Mr. Talbott indicated that he had not. In response, Mr. Rud instructed Mr. Talbott to attempt to raise N42333 on guard; however, the attempt was unsuccessful. Additionally, Mr. Rud asked Mr. Talbott to request a communications relay from a Delta Airlines aircraft that had just departed CVG and was directly overhead the last known position of N42333. The Delta Airlines aircraft was also unable to raise N42333 on the Bearcat sector frequency. Mr. Rud stated that he believed N42333 was flying in the valley, and that communication attempts in that area were usually not successful. He stated that airborne relays were just another trick to try, but that they were not totally dependable. Mr. Rud went on to state that the loss of radar and radio communications was not out of the ordinary, and that this type of event happened all the time with aircraft operating in the river valley. He indicated that because the ASR-9 and radio communications operate on line-of-sight, they sometimes lose aircraft that fly into the river valley. Mr. Rud indicated he had no further discussions regarding the event with Mr. Talbott, and did not recall any interaction concerning the event with the on-the-job training instructor (OJTI) responsible for the Bearcat position.

After the attempts to re-establish communications with N42333 failed, Mr. Rud asked the CVG tower, other CVG sector controllers, and adjacent approach control facilities to attempt to contact N42333 on their frequencies; all were unsuccessful. Additionally, Mr. Rud contacted area law enforcement agencies to determine if they had received any reports of a downed aircraft; none of the agencies contacted reported any incidents. Mr. Rud then conducted a registration check of the aircraft via an FAA website to identify the owner. He contacted directory assistance for telephone information on the registered owner, and attempted to contact him at his home. There was no answer. Mr. Rud left a message on the home voicemail for the owner to contact the CVG air traffic control facility as soon as he got home.

Mr. Rud contacted Flight Service, who advised him that the pilot of N42333 had not filed a VFR flight plan. Mr. Rud knew the aircraft was en route to Anderson, Indiana (AID), but that was all the information the facility had. Mr. Rud contacted Georgetown airport personnel, who confirmed that N42333 had departed Georgetown airport and was en route to AID. There were no emergency locator transmitter (ELT) reports or other indications of trouble, so Mr. Rud assumed the aircraft had descended into the river valley and continued on his own to the destination airport. Mr. Rud stated that, "...he didn't think much more about it." He indicated it was not an unusual event to lose low-flying aircraft along the river valley. The facility had asked aircraft for ELT reports, but

none were received, and none of the sectors in the facility had received an ELT signal. Mr. Rud stated that he did not believe that a crash had occurred and had therefore not contacted the Regional Operations Center (ROC).

Approximately 3 ½ hours after leaving the telephone message at the pilot's home, Mr. Rud stated he received a telephone call from the wife of the pilot of N42333. She reported that the pilot had not arrived at his destination and she was unaware of his location. Mr. Rud indicated that at approximately the same time, a Delta Airlines aircraft departing CVG informed the TRACON of an ELT heard on 121.5 near the estimated last known position of N42333. Mr. Rud began following the procedures in the accident binder and completed the notifications and log times. An alert notice (ALNOT) was initiated through Indianapolis Air Route Traffic Control Center in an attempt to locate N42333. When asked what had occurred between the hours of 1718 UTC and 1900 UTC, Mr. Rud stated that he was waiting for the ALNOT to expire.

Mr. Rud had not reviewed the radar data available via the STARS as part of his initial investigation into the loss of radar and radio communications with N42333. He stated that he utilized the Airport Performance Monitor (APM) to determine an exact last known position for the aircraft; 235 degrees at 13 miles from the CVG airport. When asked if he knew if N42333 was in a climb before being lost on radar, Mr. Rud stated he did not.

After the ALNOT expired, Mr. Rud stated he coordinated with Major Murphy from the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and provided the last known position for N42333. Mr. Rud stated that he split off a radar sector in the TRACON facility to assist in the search effort and requested that controllers solicit assistance from an airborne helicopter. Race14, a Visions Helicopters aircraft operating in support of the NASCAR event, agreed to assist in a search. Race14 proceeded to the last known position of N42333, and shortly after arriving reported seeing the tail section of a Robinson helicopter in the trees. The helicopter pilot then assisted the crew of a Civil Air Patrol (CAP) aircraft inbound from the south in locating the wreckage. When asked why they had not secured an airborne helicopter earlier to assist in the search, Mr. Rud stated that he did not know; that maybe a helicopter had not been available right away.

Because of poor cellular telephone reception in the area of the downed aircraft, Mr. Rud was unable to talk with ground personnel in the area of the accident. The TRACON tried but failed to establish a telephone patch with rescuers on the ground through local public safety dispatchers, so they utilized law enforcement officers aboard the CAP aircraft as a communications relay. Mr. Rud stated that an AirCare helicopter requested by law enforcement personnel arrived on scene and landed at the crash site. Sometime later, the AirCare helicopter left the scene to return to Cincinnati, and the crew advised the TRACON that the pilot of N42333 was deceased.

Mr. Rud stated that he did not recall receiving any training on alert bulletins or other search and rescue operations and notification requirements. However, as a supervisor, he had completed training on the accident/incident package process. Mr. Rud added that the

Domestic Event Network (DEN) does not want to be notified when ATC loses radio and radar contact with VFR aircraft.

When asked if he was aware of the Delta pilot's radio transmission reporting, "...a beacon on guard," from the initial airborne relay attempt, Mr. Rud said he did not hear the comment until later when he replayed the audio tapes. When asked if he knew what "a beacon on guard" was likely referring to, Mr. Rud stated he did. Mr. Rud added the developmental controller working the flight probably did not recognize the significance of the comment, and that he could not speak for the OJTI. When asked if he had spoken to the OJTI about the sudden loss of both radar and radio communications while on position, Mr. Rud stated that the supervisor is expected to talk to developmental controllers rather than around them, and that it was not uncommon to lose aircraft in the river valley. Mr. Rud added that this "unexpected" loss of radio and radar was not really unexpected. This type of event was expected when aircraft descend into the river valley. Mr. Rud noted that Race14 had reported being in the area of the crash earlier in the day filming a barge, however, Mr. Rud did not recall seeing the helicopter via radar due to the helicopter's low altitude.

Mr. Rud stated that Mr. Cole, his operations manager, was in the room during the latter portions of the event and was an asset. Mr. Rud stated he had discussed the events with Mr. Cole at the time, who advised him that, "...this sort of thing occurs all the time, that the pilot just got low and went on his merry way."

Thomas Talbott

Bearcat Sector Developmental

Mr. Talbott entered on duty with the FAA on November 13, 2008. He was assigned to Cincinnati Tower and TRACON. He held a current medical with no restrictions. His days off were Monday and Tuesday, followed by three evening shifts and two day shifts.

Mr. Talbott was in training on the Bearcat position. The Bearcat position was initially combined with the Wildcat position, but the positions were split when Mr. Talbott's training session began. Mr. Talbott opened the Bearcat position along with Nancy Million, his OJTI, in preparation for a departure rush that was about to begin. N42333 was on frequency, and shortly after the Bearcat position opened the pilot requested descent because of clouds. Shortly afterward, radar contact was lost with the helicopter. Mr. Talbott continued working the Cincinnati departures, and when he had time advised the pilot of N42333 that radar contact was lost. There was no response. Mr. Talbott continued to try to contact the pilot in between handling additional departures from Cincinnati. He transmitted on both the standard sector frequency, 128.7, and also on the emergency frequency, 121.5. Because there was still no response, Mr. Talbott asked the pilot of Delta flight 1166, who was airborne overhead the last position of N42333, to try to contact the helicopter. The Delta pilot agreed, making several attempts without success. After the last attempt, the Delta pilot commented that there was a, "... beacon on guard."¹ Asked what he thought the pilot meant by that, Mr. Talbott responded, "...

¹ Emergency frequency 121.5 is also referred to as "guard" frequency.

that I should try to contact the helicopter on guard frequency." He then noted that he had already attempted to contact the helicopter on guard (121.5 MHz).

Because the attempts to contact the helicopter had been unsuccessful, Mr. Talbott advised Mr. Rud, his supervisor, that he had lost radar contact and communications with the aircraft after the pilot had requested descent because of clouds. During his conversation with the supervisor, his OJTI did not intervene or offer any additional information. Mr. Talbott stated that it was not necessary for her to add anything because he had conveyed all the necessary information. He told the supervisor that they had lost radar contact and communications with N42333 when the aircraft was approximately 10 miles south of Cincinnati. Mr. Talbott believed that the supervisor may have suggested having another aircraft try to contact N42333, but he was uncertain of the exact timing of the supervisory discussion and his own attempts to contact the pilot.

Mr. Talbott said there were no other discussions about the helicopter between himself and the supervisor during the remainder of the shift, except for periodically checking to see if the helicopter had been located. Mr. Talbott was aware that the supervisor had been trying to find the helicopter by calling the local sheriff's departments and other FAA facilities. Mr. Talbott continued by saying that it was not uncommon to lose contact with helicopters in that area. He estimated his experience on the position at approximately 80 hours. He stated that his previous experience showed that aircraft in the area occasionally go out of radar contact, but communications normally continue uninterrupted; and typically, radar contact is eventually reestablished. He has previously attempted to reestablish communications with aircraft by asking another pilot to relay messages.

Mr. Talbott noticed the loss of radar contact with the helicopter fairly quickly after it occurred, and he tried to reestablish radar contact and communications without success. He asked the Delta Airlines pilot to attempt contact on 128.7 because the aircraft had better radio coverage in the area of the helicopter. He did not think of asking the Delta pilot to attempt contact on the guard frequency as well.

Asked about his knowledge of emergency locator transmitters, Mr. Talbott stated that they transmit a signal on guard frequency that allows the aircraft's position to be identified. He had previously heard emergency locator transmitter signals during his work in the tower.

Because of the pilot's comment that he was, "... getting into too many clouds," Mr. Talbott was asked if he was familiar with the provisions of FAA Order 7110.65, "Air Traffic Control," related to assisting VFR aircraft that encounter instrument conditions. Mr. Talbott stated that he was not. Asked if a VFR pilot entering instrument conditions constituted an emergency, Mr. Talbott responded, "potentially." Asked what he would do to assist a VFR aircraft that encountered instrument conditions, Mr. Talbott responded that it depended on weather conditions. Mr. Talbott stated that he could offer an alternative airport with better weather conditions, ask the pilot if he was IFR qualified, or asked the pilot if he was able to maintain his own clearance from terrain and obstructions.

However, he could not explain how a VFR pilot operating in instrument conditions could be expected to do that. Asked if he had any additional information available at the control position that could be used to help a pilot maintain a safe altitude, Mr. Talbott initially responded that he did not, but then acknowledged that minimum vectoring altitude information was available.

At the end of his shift, Mr. Talbott was still uncertain about what had happened to the helicopter. He heard that the pilot's wife had called the TRACON, and knew that the supervisor was still looking for the aircraft. Mr. Talbott asked to be contacted if the aircraft was found.

Asked about his instructor's role in the initial response to the loss of contact, Mr. Talbott stated that he could not recall if she had said anything at the time. He stated that she intervened in his operation when it was necessary to do so. When he was on position, he tried to handle the work as much as possible without intervention from the instructor in order to show that he knew what he was doing. During the period between loss of contact with the helicopter and beginning his attempts to regain contact, the instructor did not intervene because Mr. Talbott was handling the situation adequately. When he lost contact with the helicopter, Mr. Talbott had transmitted, "radar services lost." This was incorrect phraseology, and Mr. Talbott stated that the instructor did discuss it with him at the end of their training session. Mr. Talbott stated that he did not notice when the helicopter turned from a northwestern track to a westerly heading.

Nancy Million

CVG Bearcat OJTI

Ms. Million entered on duty with the FAA on October 22, 1989. She began her FAA career as a co-op employee with Indianapolis Air Route Traffic Control Center and Indianapolis ATCT from October 1989 until June 1994. She completed controller training at the FAA Academy and was assigned to Peoria ATCT in September 1994. Ms. Million completed her training at Peoria ATCT in 1996. She transferred to CVG on October 27, 2000, and completed training on March 18, 2002. On the day of the accident, Ms. Million was providing on-the-job training to Mr. Talbott on the Bearcat sector.

Ms. Million and Mr. Talbott began working at the Bearcat sector at 0900 in anticipation of the departure push. When they received their position relief briefing, N42333 was already on their frequency. They assumed responsibility for the Bearcat sector and began working CVG departures off of runway 27. Ms. Million stated this was unusual, because the normal configuration at CVG is for departures to come off of runway 18C. Instead, they were coming off runway 27 because of the NASCAR race. Ms. Million was concerned that the departures off runway 27 would cross the projected path of N42333 as it flew northwest along the river valley at 1,500 feet and there would be a conflict. As Mr. Talbott continued working departures off of runway 27, N42333 advised he was getting into some clouds and requested a lower altitude. Mr. Talbott instructed the pilot to maintain VFR at or below 2000 feet, and shortly after beginning a descent the data tag

disappeared. Because aircraft were departing westbound from CVG, N42333 was in Mr. Talbott's field of vision and he noticed the tag drop almost immediately.

Ms. Million stated that in her experience, helicopters sometimes go as low as 600 feet in the area where N42333 was operating and may descend below radar coverage. She indicated that sometimes the radar data tag drops, but controllers can still see the primary radar target and in general do not lose radio contact. After noticing the loss of radar contact, Mr. Talbott advised N42333, "...radar service lost," and attempted to raise the aircraft on the Bearcat sector and guard frequencies several times; all attempts were unsuccessful. Ms. Million then instructed Mr. Talbott to notify Mr. Rud, the radar supervisor, that they had lost contact with N42333.

Ms. Million stated that when Mr. Rud came to the Bearcat sector position he asked what the aircraft's last altitude was, what the aircraft had encountered, the pilot's last transmission, and the aircraft's last known position. Mr. Rud also directed Mr. Talbott to have another aircraft attempt to establish communications with N42333. Delta 1166 was departing CVG runway 27 and was overhead the last known position of N42333. Mr. Talbott asked the pilot to attempt to contact N42333. While Delta 1166 was attempting to contact N42333, Ms. Million, Mr. Talbott, and Mr. Rud were discussing the county lines located on the west side of the river near the last known position of the N42333. Ms. Million recalled Delta 1166 saying that they were unsuccessful in contacting N42333, but did not understand the pilot to say that there was a "beacon on guard." She stated she thought that Delta was advising that ATC should try contacting the helicopter on guard. Ms. Million and Mr. Talbott continued to work departures off of Covington, and Mr. Rud took over handling the problem of the missing aircraft.

When asked what she had thought happened to N42333, Ms. Million stated, "I don't know what I thought, I did not want a worst-case scenario, I wanted the best possible outcome." She stated the last altitude she saw for N42333 was 1000 feet via the radar data tag on the STARS display. Ms. Million stated that during the rest of the shift she asked the supervisor numerous times if the aircraft had arrived at AID. She was aware that Mr. Rud was contacting area law enforcement agencies to find out if there were any reported airplane crashes in the area.

Ms. Million was asked if the facility conducted training on inadvertent VFR flight into instrument conditions. She stated that type of training should be done earlier in the Academy or classroom and that on the job training (OJT) deals with scenarios that occur now in the facility on position. Ms. Million was asked if she was concerned when the pilot stated that he was, "...getting into too many clouds." She stated the pilot was a VFR pilot and that he was supposed to remain clear of clouds. Ms. Million added that if the pilot had told her he had a problem, she could have helped him get to VMC conditions or ask if he was qualified for IFR flight.

Ms. Million was asked if she had ever gotten a request for an ELT check from the center or AFRCC. She replied that she had previously asked different aircraft in different parts

of the airspace and at different altitudes to check for ELT transmissions on 121.5. Ms. Million stated that the TRACON assumed aircraft are monitoring 121.5.

Ms. Million is certified as a Controller-in-Charge (CIC) and works as a CIC almost daily. When asked what she would do if she were CIC during an event like this, she stated that she would follow the checklist and that she expected pilots to report any active ELTs that they heard. She added that contacting area law enforcement to assist in locating the helicopter was a good idea.

Ms. Million heard some discussion about an ALNOT being issued before she left for the day at 1330, and also heard something about the pilot's wife calling. Ms. Million stated she does not know who the wife called or where she called. Ms. Million later received a text from the NATCA representative asking how she was doing and concluded that there had been an accident involving N42333.

Scott Dunham
NTSB ATC Investigations