

NTSB Accident Number CEN19FA082



ATC SUMMARY

ACCIDENT

Location: Canadian, Texas
Date: February 15, 2019
Time: 0957 CST
Registration: N421NS
Aircraft: Cessna 421C

PARTICIPANTS

Josh Lindberg
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

Andrew Hall
Air Safety Investigator
Textron Aviation

Bill Fitzgerald
Inspector
LBB FSDO

Kurt Gibson
Air Safety Investigator
Continental Motors

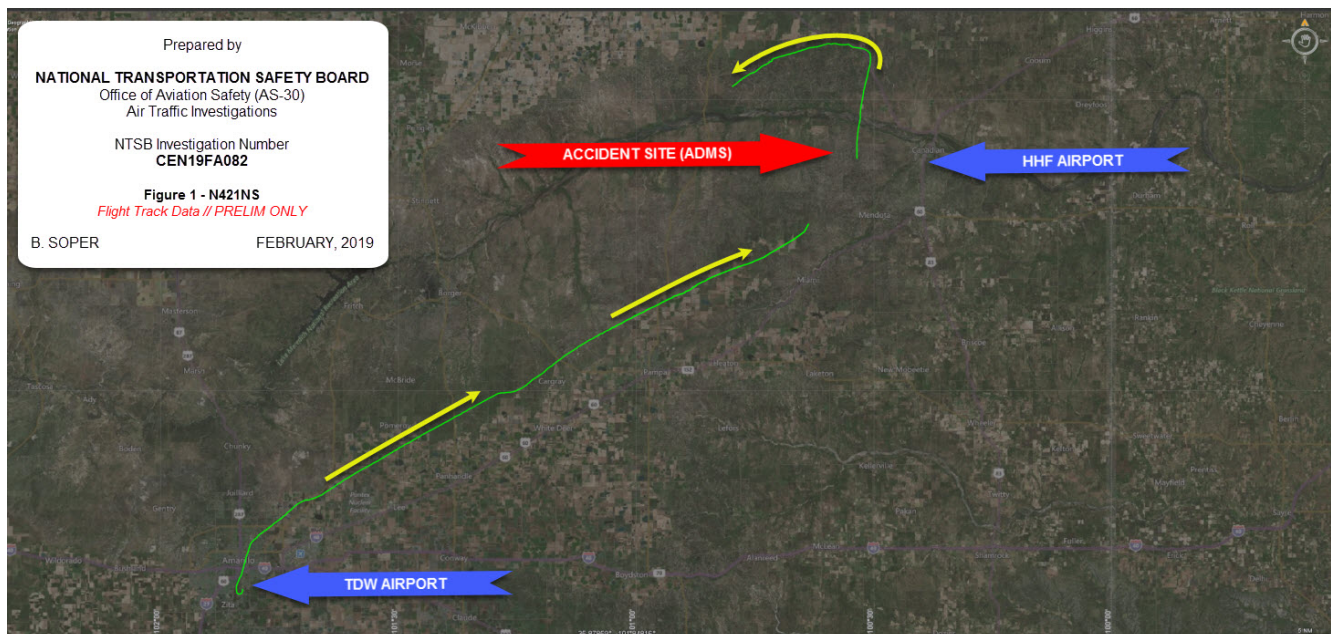
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HISTORY OF FLIGHT

On February 15, 2019, about 1000 central standard time, a Cessna 421C airplane, N421NS, impacted terrain about 8 miles west of Hemphill County Airport (HHF), Canadian, Texas. The private pilot and one passenger were fatally injured and the airplane was destroyed. The airplane was registered to and operated by the pilot under the provisions of Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 as a personal flight. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident and no flight plan had been filed. The flight originated from the Tradewind Airport (TDW), Amarillo, Texas at an unknown time.

A witness who was monitoring the HHF common traffic advisory frequency stated that he heard the pilot over the radio and responded. The pilot reportedly inquired about the cloud heights and the witness responded that the clouds were 800 to 1,000 ft above ground level (agl). The witness did not see the airplane in the air.

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL / RADAR



Track data indicates N421NS likely departed RWY 17 at Tradewinds Airport (TDW) at about 0900 CST making a climbing right turn out to a NNE bound heading until passing through about 5,500' msl, then turning further right to a NE bound heading. The aircraft continued to climb to a cruise altitude of about 7,500' msl and tracked NE bound toward Hemphill Airport (HHF). About 26 nm SW of HHF, the aircraft began to descend until about 13.5 nm SW of HHF when track data was lost at 0921:20 CST, and indicated an altitude of 4,775' msl. At 0925:02 about 6 nm NE of where track data was previously lost, and about 6.5 nm W of HHF, track data resumed and indicated the aircraft was climbing through about 4,650' msl on a NNE heading. The flight track continued NNE bound for about 11 nm then began turning left to a SW bound heading reaching about 6,500' msl, then descending again until track data was lost at 0935:31 CST indicating an altitude of about 4,950' msl and about 20.5 nm NW of HHF, and about 12 nm NW of the accident site as documented in ADMS.

First Track Data: 0900:11 CST // 4,075' msl ---- Last Track Data: 0935:31 CST // 4,950' msl

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The controllers knew the local pilot as he was known to call Amarillo terminal radar approach control (AMA TRACON), on a daily basis. The pilot was initially receiving services from AMA TRACON who transferred him to Albuquerque Center (ZAB) Sector 15. At 0910 ZAB established communications with the pilot and at 0912 a traffic advisory was issued him. At 0920 ZAB terminated service 18.7 miles southwest of HHF.

The FAA conducted a review of the ATC services provided and stated the following, in part:

The airplane departed TDW in visual meteorological conditions and was provided VFR flight following services to HHF by an AMA controller. The flight appeared routine and normal to the Albuquerque center (ZAB) air traffic manager (ATM) and he described the traffic was light in volume and complexity. The ZAB controller was not aware of any adverse weather conditions in the area or along the accident airplane's route of flight. HHF does not have weather reporting capability; however, the controller did have access to the weather in the vicinity of HHF via a weather request function. The ZAB ATM stated that there is no facility expectation for controllers to obtain the weather or ensure a pilot has the weather for their destination airport when receiving VFR flight following services. The ZAB ATM stated that radar services for the accident airplane were terminated when it descended through 5,900 ft and about 18 miles from HHF Airport. The ATM stated that this is a normal practice in the area due to insufficient radio and radar coverage below 7,000 ft.