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Date: February 24, 2022

Subject: CEN22FA131 Air Traffic Control Communications

On February 22, 2022, about 2241 eastern standard time, a Piper PA32 airplane, N3952W, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Fostoria, Ohio. The airplane had been operating on an instrument flight rules flight plan at the time of the accident with a destination of Findlay, Ohio (FDY). Following the accident, a review of air traffic control audio from commercially available sources revealed the following:

The accident airplane was at 7,000 ft and the pilot established communication with the controller, advised they had the weather at FDY, and requested vectors for the RNAV Runway 25 Approach. The controller advised the pilot to expect vectors for the RNAV Runway 25 Approach at FDY. The pilot then requested a lower altitude, and the controller advised them to expect a lower altitude in five miles.

Shortly thereafter, the controller instructed the pilot to maintain 3,000 ft, and issued several turns, but they were having difficulty tracking the desired course due to winds. The controller asked the pilot if they wanted to proceed direct to the DOYET intersection (Initial Approach Fix on the final approach course) and execute the procedure turn, to which they replied in the affirmative. The controller instructed the pilot to proceed direct to DOYET, cross DOYET at or above 3,000 ft, and cleared them for the RNAV Runway 25 Approach. The LC controller instructed accident pilot to say altitude and issued them several Low Altitude Alerts, with no response. There were no more transmissions from N3952W.
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