



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Washington, D.C. 20594

October 28, 2021

Specialist's Report

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

ERA21LA122

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A. ACCIDENT

Location: Leicester, Massachusetts
Date: February 2, 2021
Time: 1656 eastern standard time (EST)¹
2156 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC)
Airplane: Piper PA-46-350P; N221ST

B. AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL INVESTIGATOR

Betty Koschig
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C. SUMMARY

On February 2, 2021, about 1656 eastern standard time, a Piper PA-46-350P, N221ST, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Leicester, Massachusetts (MA). The commercial pilot and two passengers received minor injuries. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

D. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The air traffic control (ATC) investigator did not travel or conduct interviews in support of this accident investigation. All data used to produce this specialist report was provided by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

E. FACTUAL INFORMATION

1.0 History of Flight

N221ST departed Martha's Vineyard Airport (MVY), Vineyard Haven, MA about 1616.

At the time of the accident, ATC services for N221ST were provided by Worcester Regional Airport (ORH), Worcester, MA, Airport Traffic Control Tower (ATCT).

About 1644, the Yankee Terminal Radar Approach Control (Y90) contacted the ORH local controller (LC) with inbound landing information on N221ST conducting the RNAV (Area Navigation)² approach to runway 11. The LC acknowledged the inbound and informed the Y90 controller that automatic terminal information service (ATIS)³ information Lima was pending.

About 1645, The LC informed Y90 that ATIS information Lima was current.

¹ All times are eastern standard time (EST) unless otherwise noted.

² RNAV is a method of navigation that permits aircraft operation on any desired flight path within the coverage of ground or space-based navigation aids or within the limits of the capability of self-contained aids, or a combination of these.

³ ATIS provides advance airport/terminal area and meteorological information to aircraft.

About 1653, the pilot of N221ST contacted ORH ATCT and reported they were one mile from the final approach fix⁴, RILOC, for runway 11. The LC acknowledged the pilot and cleared the pilot to land on runway 11.

About 1655, the pilot of N221ST transmitted to LC that they were having a problem. The LC asked the pilot to say intentions. The pilot did not respond. The LC tried to contact N221ST again, and the pilot broadcasted a broken⁵ transmission that included the word “ice”. The Y90 controller told the LC to instruct the pilot to check his altitude immediately, and to issue the pilot the current altimeter. The LC issued the low altitude alert and ORH altimeter to the pilot.

About 1656, the LC asked the pilot of N221ST if additional services would be needed after landing. The pilot did not respond.

About 1657, the LC contacted Y90 and asked if they had a radar target on N221ST. The Y90 controller responded that they did not have a radar target on the airplane. The LC tried to contact N221ST, but the pilot did not respond.

About 1658, the Y90 contacted the LC for an update on N221ST. The LC responded that they had no contact with N221ST, and that the pilot had reported icing in their last transmission.

2.0 Radar Data

FAA radar data was provided by Y90. The radar source data was obtained from the Cummington (QHA) and the Providence (PVD) antennas.

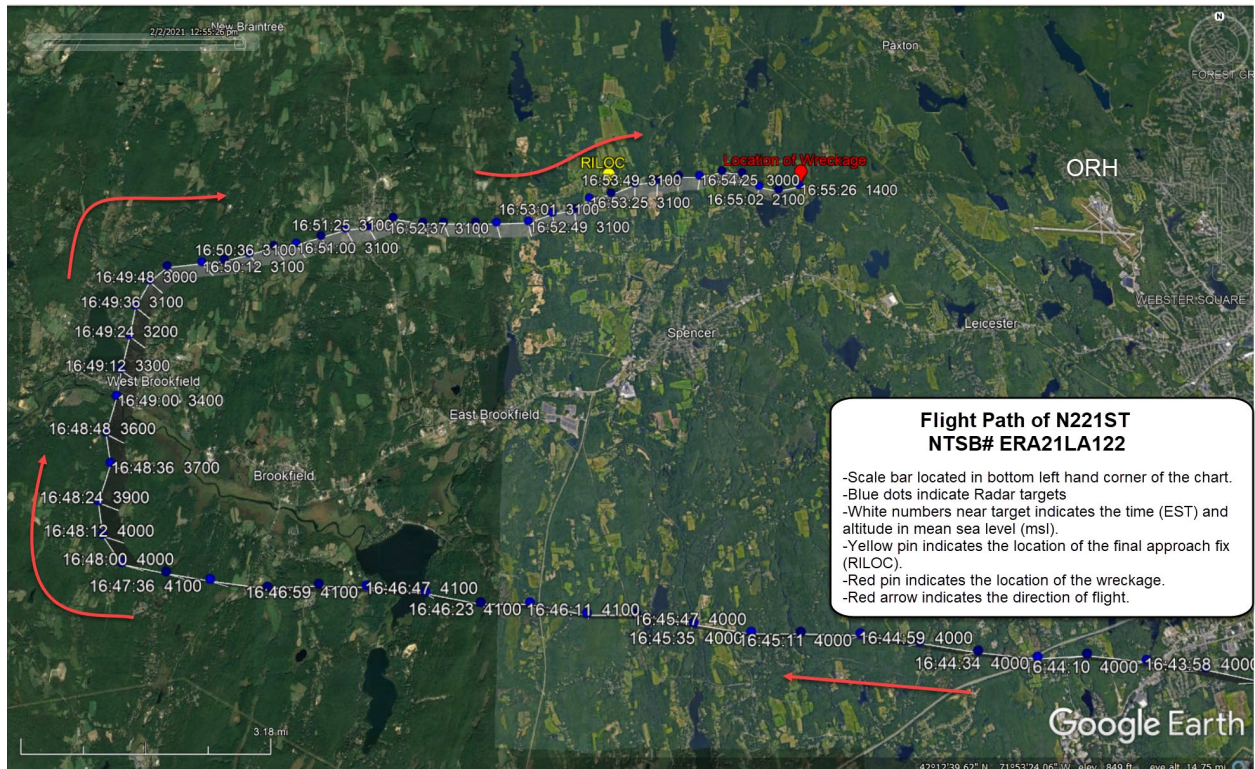
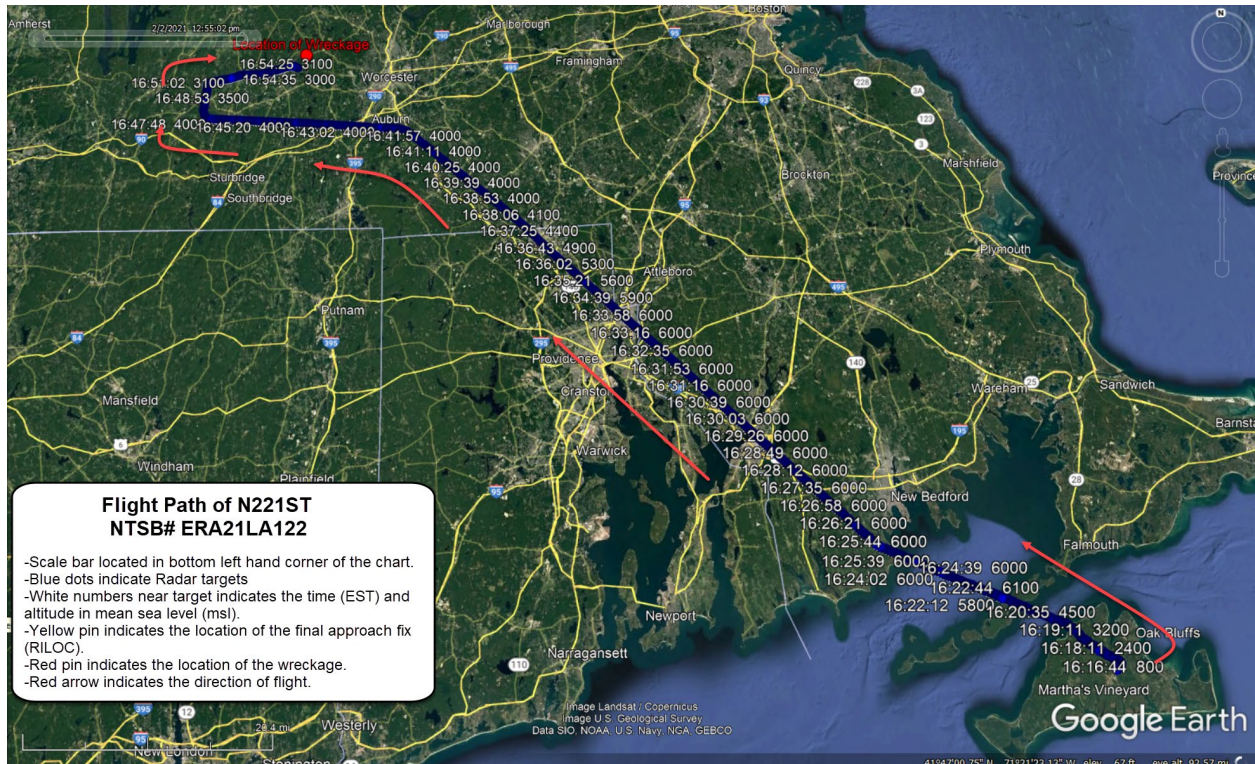
2.1 Radar Graphics

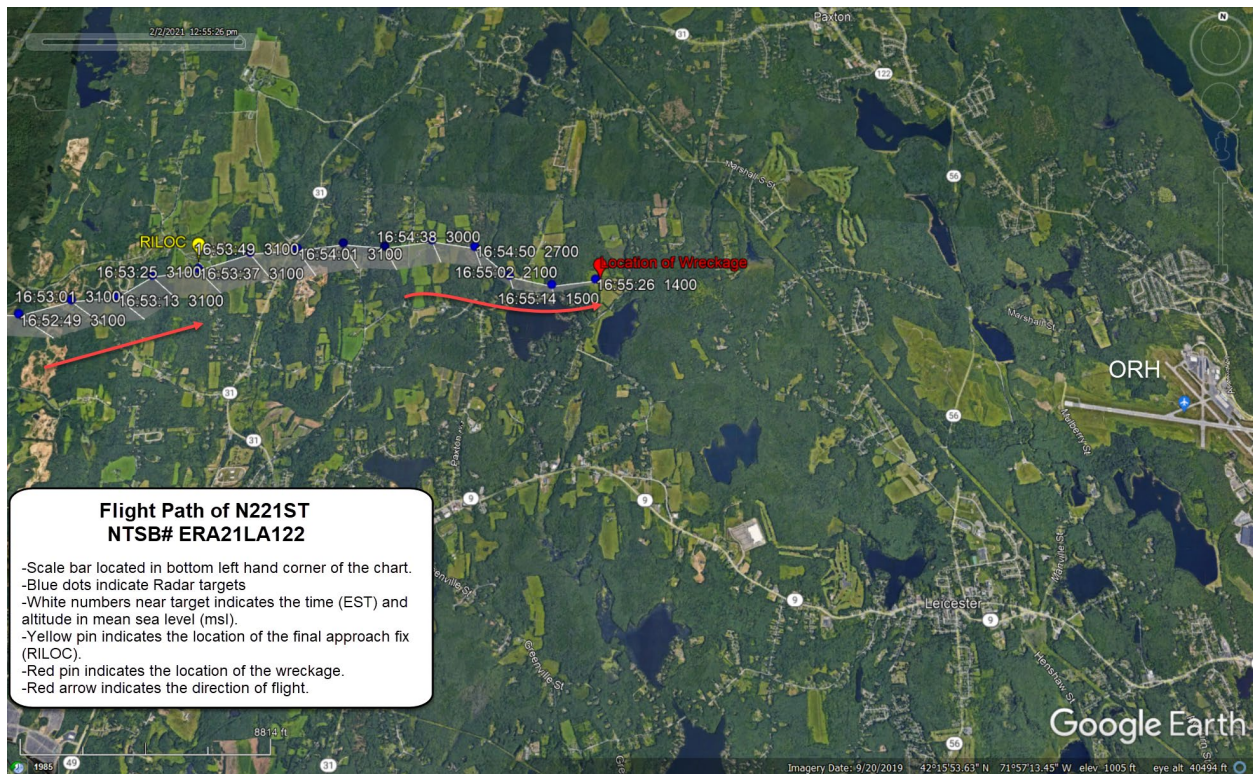
Figures 1 through 3 are Google Earth screenshots⁶ illustrating the flight path of N221ST after departing MVY Airport and until the time of the accident. Each screenshot has a legend that provides chart and graphics information.

⁴ A fix from which the final approach (IFR) to an airport is executed and which identifies the beginning of the final approach segment.

⁵ Commonly used term to describe that the quality of the radio transmission as being disjointed or jerky.

⁶ Screen captures of the flight track information are overlaid on geographic imagery from a commercial mapping program.





F. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – ORH ATC Audio Recording
- Attachment 2 – ORH ATIS Recordings
- Attachment 3 – Aircraft Accident Package
- Attachment 4 – FAA Radar Data
- Attachment 5 – Y90 Mandatory Occurrence Report

Submitted by:

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