



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Washington, D.C. 20594

August 3, 2017

Group Chairman's Factual Report

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

OPS17IA003

Table Of Contents

A. INCIDENT.....	3
B. AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL GROUP.....	3
C. SUMMARY	3
D. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION	3
E. FACTUAL INFORMATION	3
1.0 History of Flight.....	3
2.0 Airport and Radar Data	4
3.0 Weather Information	5
4.0 AAY4203 Crew Statements.....	5
F. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS	5

A. INCIDENT

Location: Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport, Westfield, Massachusetts (BAF)
Date: October 21, 2016
Time: 0822 eastern daylight time (EDT) / 1222 coordinated universal time (UTC)
Airplane: Allegiant Airlines Flight 4203 (AAY4203), McDonnell Douglas MD-83

B. AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL GROUP

Andy Olvis
Group Chairman and IIC
Operational Factors Division (AS-30)
National Transportation Safety Board

Mr. Larry Johnson
Event Investigation Manager
FAA Safety and Technical Training
Federal Aviation Administration

C. SUMMARY

On October 21, 2016, at about 0822 eastern daylight time, a runway incursion occurred at the Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport, Westfield, Massachusetts when AAY4203 landed on runway 20 while Guard Sweeper 96 was conducting runway sweeping operations on the last 4000' of the same runway. After AAY4203 had stopped on the runway, the pilot reported they were about 200 feet from the sweeper. There was no reported damage to the aircraft or to the sweeper, and no reported injuries. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed, and AAY4203 had filed an instrument flight plan for the 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 121 repositioning flight from Asheville Regional Airport, Asheville, North Carolina to BAF with only a crew on board and no passengers.

D. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

On October 31, 2016, the air traffic control group convened at the air traffic control tower (ATCT) located at BAF. The group met with the BAF Air Traffic Manager Mr. Arthur Lustenberger for a facility inbrief. The group conducted a tour of the tower cab, reviewed facility data, and conducted interviews.

On Tuesday November 1, 2016, the group reconvened at the Massachusetts Air National Guard (ANG), 104th Fighter Squadron to meet with Brian Maple, the military airfield manager, and to obtain data relevant to the investigation. Additionally, the group interviewed the sweeper driver and reviewed the airfield licensing training course. Later the group met up with the acting manager of BAF.

E. FACTUAL INFORMATION

1.0 History of Flight

At 1133:21, "crash crew" requested permission to enter the airfield to conduct checks of the arrestor cable located on both ends of runway 20. Additionally, "airport 16" was also on the airfield conducting surface checks of the runway and taxiway lights.

At 1138:17, Guard Sweeper 96 contacted the BAF local controller and requested permission to conduct “vac” sweeping on the first 4000’ of runway 02.

At 1146:23, Airport 16 reported clear of the airfield movement areas.

At 1149:43, Airport 16 requested the tower activate the approach lighting systems, the tower acknowledged and turned all lights on.

At 1151:26, Airport 16 reported the approach lights were all working.

At 1212:51, the crash crew vehicles that had been on the runway conducting checks of the arrestor cables reported clear of the movement areas.

At 1213:36, Massachusetts DOT vehicle “DOT1” requested permission to proceed to alpha to runway 33 plus 1. The local controller instructed DOT1 to turn left on runway 20, cross runway 33 and to proceed east on taxiway A.

At 1215:08, DOT1 reported clear of the airport movement areas.

At 1217:22, AAY4203 checked on the local control frequency outside of WESIE. The local controller responded with the wind and altimeter followed by a clearance to land on runway 20. The controller added the weather was “just as the ATIS reported, ¾ mile visibility overcast ceiling 200’.” The pilot acknowledged the landing clearance and weather.

At 1222:53, AAY4203 contacted the local controller and transmitted “we were on the runway about 1500’ short of the end and there was truck on the runway.” The local controller asked the pilot if the vehicle was in the approach lights. The pilot replied the vehicle was on the runway. The local controller acknowledged the pilot and instructed him to make a 180 degree turn and back taxi on the runway.

At 1223:10, Guard Sweeper 96 contacted the local controller and said there was an aircraft on the runway. He asked if he had missed a radio call advising of the aircraft. The local controller confirmed the sweeper was still operating in the first 4000’ of runway 02; the driver of Guard Sweeper 96 advised he was.

At 1225:00, the pilot of AAY4203 transmitted “I don’t know what the situation was with the truck, but if he would have been up any further with the visibility the way it was, there’s, there would have been no avoiding him.” The local controller advised he understood and would follow up.

There were no further transmissions pertinent to the incursion incident.

2.0 Airport and Radar Data

Radar data for this report was obtained from the FAA Yankee terminal radar approach control (Y90) located in Windsor Locks, Connecticut. The Y90 plot playback (.PPB) data was of good quality and was part of the standard terminal automation replacement system (STARS).

Figure 1 shows the radar data of AAY4203 vectored to the airport from the south and intercepting the ILS runway 20 approach. Figure 2 shows the radar data of AAY4203 as it travelled on the localizer, the last radar target was at 1221:53 at an altitude of 800’.

The Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport is serviced by an FAA Federal Contract Tower (FCT) that operates daily from 0700 to 2200. It had two main runways, runway 02/20 that serviced the military air National Guard Boeing F15 aircraft stationed at the airfield and runway 15/33 that primarily serviced the general aviation traffic (see figure 3). The runway incursion incident occurred at the approach end of runway 02.

3.0 Weather Information

The 1218 BAF Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS) observation included winds from 020 degrees at 3 knots, visibility 3/4 miles, runway 20 runway visual range 5000 feet variable 5500 feet, overcast at 200 feet above ground level, temperature 13 degrees C, dew point 13 degrees C, and an altimeter setting of 29.85 inches of mercury.

The air traffic controllers utilized a control tower visibility chart in the control tower to assist in determining tower visibility (see figure 4).

4.0 AAY4203 Crew Statements

Pilots statements provided by the crew of AAY4203 (attachment 3) indicated the instrument approach being flown was normal and the pilot acquired the runway environment at 100 feet above the ground. The crew reported the landing was uneventful and as the aircraft was decelerating below 100 knots, they observed headlights on the runway. The crew increased the braking and the aircraft stopped on the runway centerline about 200 feet from the vehicle. The crew notified the tower of the truck on the runway and taxied to parking.

F. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 Figures

Attachment 2 Interview Summaries

Attachment 3 Pilot Statements

Submitted by:

Andy Olvis
Senior Air Traffic Investigator

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY BLANK