

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety

Washington, DC 20594

IAD05MA006

Air Traffic Control Factual Report of Investigation

ATTACHMENT 1

Personnel Interviews

Brian Park

Mr. Brian Park was interviewed via the telephone on November 1, 2004. Ms. Barbara Zimmermann and Mr. Dan Diggins, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) conducted the interview. Mr. Park named Mr. Gary Blankenship, as his representative. In response to questions, Mr. Park provided the following information:

Mr. Park entered on duty with the FAA on May 11, 1997 and had been assigned to Greensboro Tower since February 2000. He received facility certification in 2001. He previously worked at Florence Tower.

Mr. Park's operating initials were "BP."

Mr. Park had no military air traffic control experience. He held a private pilot certificate but was not current.

Mr. Park's medical certificate was current with no restrictions.

On the day of the accident, Mr. Park was scheduled for a 0600 - 1400 local shift, the 4^{th} day of his workweek. He arrived on duty at 0600 EDT. Mr. Park stated he had been on annual leave for the past week and this was his first day back to work.

Mr. Park was working the WR position at the time of the accident. He explained the position was combined with the Greensboro/Winston-Salem final radar position. In this type of configuration, he was responsible for approach and departure control services for GSO and approximately 11 satellite airports, which included MTV. His area of responsibility extended 30 miles north, 25 miles east and 25 miles west of GSO from the surface to 12,000 feet. He stated MTV was depicted on the radar video map and located in the northern portion of his area responsibility. Controllers could select an additional map, which depicts the final approach courses for the satellite airports, which included MTV.

Mr. Park explained on the day of the accident, he arrived on duty and worked the flight data position for about an hour before taking a one-hour break. He then worked the west radar position for about an hour. This was during the morning hours and all the arrivals into MTV executed missed approaches due to weather. After an hour break, he was assigned to the south radar position. After working about an hour, he was on break for another hour when he was assigned to work the west radar position again. He did not recall how long he was on position when the accident occurred.

Mr. Park explained that N501RH was handed off from Charlotte Approach leaving 5000 feet. He issued the flight crew the GSO altimeter setting and asked them to advise when they had the MTV weather and to say type of approach. He stated the

flight crew requested the LOC runway 30 approach. Mr. Park went on to explain that when the airplane was just north of GSO he advised the flight crew to descend and maintain 3000 feet. At about the same time the pilot of N500CG, a LEAR, contacted him and requested to land at MTV. Mr. Park amended N501RH's altitude to maintain 4000 feet and instructed the flight crew to fly heading 050 degrees in order to sequence the airplane behind N500CG. He then cleared the pilot of N500CG for the LOC runway 30 approach and asked the pilot to report cancellation. He then issued holding instructions to the flight crew of N501RH. After he received N500CG's cancellation, he cleared the flight crew of N501RH for the approach and asked them to report inbound. As soon as the flight crew reported inbound, he issued a frequency change to the airport advisory frequency. A while later he thought he heard the flight crew say that they were executing a missed approach but he was unsure. He asked them to say again. After confirming the flight crew was on a missed approach, he instructed them to climb and maintain 4400 feet. He did not see the airplane's radar return so he asked a pilot of a Cherokee flying nearby to attempt to contact the pilot. The Cherokee pilot advised that he was unable to contact the pilot. He contacted Roanoke Tower, advised the controller to block 5000 feet and below, and explained that a King Air was on a missed approach at MTV. He also asked the controller to check for primary targets near the airport and advise if they saw anything, which they did not.

Mr. Park stated he did not know why he issued 4400 feet. He said it was the first altitude that came to mine because it was the minimum vectoring altitude northwest of MTV. He stated he wanted N501RH climbing in order for the radar track to reacquire. Once that occurred he would be able to identify the aircraft and issue a heading. He stated N501RH's radar track never reacquired.

Mr. Park explained radar coverage was limited below 2000 feet southeast of MTV. Controllers usually lose radar contact when aircraft, executing the LOC runway 30 approach, reach 2000 feet, which was normally 2 miles from the airport.

Mr. Park recalled glancing at N501RH's radar track once after he issued the flight crew the frequency change to the airport advisory frequency. At that time, the aircraft was about 3 miles southeast of the airport descending out of 3600 feet. He recalled that he thought the aircraft was high but he could not contact the flight crew because they were on the airport advisory frequency. He went on to say that he made a comment to the controller working the flight data position located next to him about N501RH's altitude. When asked if he attempted to contact another pilot to relay a message to the flight crew of N501RH about the aircraft's altitude, he stated he did not. He also stated that he thought a long time had passed between the approach clearance and when the flight crew pilot reported on the missed approach. Mr. Park stated he did not observe the low altitude alert nor hear the aural warning. The next time he glanced in the area of MTV, it was when the flight crew reported executing a missed approach. He was unsure of the aircraft's position because neither the aircraft's target nor ARTS data block reacquired.

Mr. Park stated that controllers at GSO did not receive updated weather information for MTV. They relied on pilot reports for changes in weather conditions. Weather was available to the pilot via an on field ASOS. He stated during the morning all the arrivals into MTV had executed a missed approach. That was not the case when he worked the position again in the afternoon. He remembered the pilot of N500CG reported breaking out just above minimums and he then relayed the information incorrectly to the pilot of N501RH. Immediately after that, an unknown pilot corrected him.

When asked if it would be beneficial to establish an additional radar position during a race event that was dedicated to provide arrival and departure services only for MTV, Mr. Park stated no. Mr. Park explained that it was not necessary because it was not labor intensive to handle the additional aircraft during a race event. MTV is considered a non-radar environment and controllers could clear an aircraft for an approach only after the preceding aircraft has landed or canceled IFR flight plan.