



## **NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD**

Office of Aviation Safety  
Washington, D.C. 20594

April 22, 2016

Attachment 1 – Interview Summary

# **AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SPECIALIST'S REPORT**

**CEN15FA190**

## **CAB Approach (CAP)<sup>1</sup>**

Mr. William Rygiel was interviewed on April 27, 2015. Mr. Rygiel was represented by Mr. Shawn Bates, PIA NATCA facility vice-representative. Also present during this interview was Mr. Nick Fuller, from FAA's office of ATO Safety. In response to questions presented, Mr. Rygiel provided the following information.

His air traffic control experience began in December of 2010 at the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. After successful completion of initial air traffic control training he began working at Peoria Terminal Radar Approach Control (PIA TRACON) in February of 2011.

His regular work schedule was a rotating shift schedule with regular days off on Tuesday and Wednesday. His work schedule for the week leading up to, and the day of the accident was as follows:

Tuesday	Off		
Wednesday	Off		
Thursday	1445 - 2245	eve shift	
Friday	1215 - 2015	swing shift	
Saturday	0715 - 1515	day shift	
Sunday	0545 - 1345	day shift	
Monday	2230 - 0630	mid shift	(day of accident)

He was working CAP at the time of the accident. He stated that he had no suspensions and had not had any documented operational incidents while at PIA. He did not hold any collateral duties and had not been on any recent details. He estimated the weather at the time of the accident to be less than one mile visibility, with a ceiling below 1,000 feet above ground level (agl). He recalled nothing remarkable about the 72 hours leading up to the time of the accident, and said that it had been routine. He stated that he did file an ATSAP<sup>2</sup> report as a result of this accident.

His operating initials were WR and his supervisor was Mr. Jay McKinty. He stated that he possessed a current second class medical certificate at the time of the accident, however did not recall when his last air traffic control (ATC) physical had been conducted. He stated that he had a restriction to wear corrective lenses while performing air traffic control duties and that he was wearing them at the time of the accident. He stated that he had no other waivers or restrictions to his medical certificate. He held no other aeronautical ratings or certificates and had a degree in air traffic control from the University of North Dakota.

On the day of the accident, he was working his normally scheduled shift and stated that he was current and proficient on all positions for which he was certified. He had reviewed the audio and video replay of the event prior to the interview. He stated there was no training being conducted during or leading up to the time of the accident. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the heaviest) he

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<sup>1</sup> CAP – Cab Approach – The position identification utilized by PIA during the mid-shift configuration that denotes the combination of all tower and approach control positions to one position in the tower.

<sup>2</sup> ATSAP – Air Traffic Safety Action Program – A Voluntary reporting program that allows air traffic controllers and other employees to report safety and operational concerns.

said that he would classify the traffic load as 1 at the time of the accident. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the most complex) he said that he would classify the traffic complexity as 1 at the time of the accident. He did not recall any distractions leading up to or around the time of the accident. He said that a relief briefing was conducted when he assumed the position as CAP, a checklist was utilized and it was recorded.

He recalled accepting the radar handoff on the accident aircraft and was vectoring him for the ILS runway 20 approach at Bloomington Airport (BMI). Nothing was out of the ordinary, and he said that he cleared him for the approach and informed the pilot to report his instrument flight rules (IFR) cancellation, terminated radar services, and instructed to the pilot to change to advisory frequency. A short time later, about when the accident airplane should have been landing, he seen a radar target pop up in the vicinity of the airport and thought that was a little unusual and decided to check into it. After about 5 to 10 minutes, he called the BMI airport authority, the fire department, and called to the break room to have another controller to come to radar and assist with coordination. He obtained the position of the brief “pop up” utilizing the FALCON<sup>3</sup> replay tool, and provided that position to the fire department, but did not do that on a recorded telephone line. He was not aware if first responders had trouble finding the aircraft, but said that he knew it was a few hours before they confirmed the wreckage.

He said that the accident aircraft appeared to intercept the localizer just fine, and was established on the approach before he switched him to advisory. There were no other aircraft inbound to BMI at the time the accident aircraft was approaching. When he observed the “pop up” near the airport that he felt may be the accident aircraft, he did not observe any alerts such as an Minimum Safe Altitude Warning (MSAW)<sup>4</sup> or Low Altitude Alert (LA)<sup>5</sup>. He said that occasionally aircraft would forget to cancel their IFR after hours like that, and he would have to call the airport authority or airlines and that they are pretty responsive.

When asked about how it normally works for an aircraft conducting an approach into BMI, he stated that once the aircraft is established on approach, radar services are terminated, and the aircraft is switched to the common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF)<sup>6</sup>. The CTAF at BMI is not monitored by PIA. He recalled getting a PIREP<sup>7</sup> from a previous UPS aircraft, and thought it was just in relation to tops and bases. That was the only PIREP he remembered getting.

He did not recall issuing the weather to the accident aircraft and said that normally aircraft would check in with the current weather already, or they would request it, but he would not just issue it

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<sup>3</sup> FALCON – A software system utilized for the instant / rapid replay of air traffic control operational incidents in a format much like the one displayed to the air traffic control specialist. It is used in terminal radar facilities to review training management issues, investigate accidents and operational errors, develop facility specific specialty training programs, and present facility-wide briefings on operational incidents.

<sup>4</sup> MSAW - a ground-based safety net intended to warn the air traffic controller about the increased risk of controlled flight into terrain by generating, in a timely manner, an alert of aircraft proximity to terrain or obstacles.

<sup>5</sup> LA – Low Altitude Alert – An automated function of the installed radar system at CRG that alerts the controller when a Mode C transponder equipped aircraft on an IFR flight plan is below a predetermined minimum safe altitude. Both aural and visual alerts are provided.

<sup>6</sup> CTAF – Common Traffic Advisory Frequency – A VHF radio frequency used for air-to-air communication at US, Canadian, and Australian non-towered airports.

<sup>7</sup> PIREP – Pilot Weather Report – A report made by a pilot of meteorological phenomena encountered by an aircraft in flight.

on his own. At the time of the accident, he did not feel that the weather would have been a factor. He stated there were five outlying fields that he routinely provided approach control services to in that area, and that if a pilot requested the weather, he had the ability to pull up the latest weather via the FDIO<sup>8</sup> system. He said that they would routinely get one or two arrivals into BMI after the ATC facility there would close in the evening, and that pilots would normally check in with the weather already received.

He stated that the PIA weather is updated through the night, but that he would not issue PIA weather to an aircraft going into BMI, only what they could actually get from BMI because the weather was often very different at the two locations. He said that whatever weather gets called over from adjacent facilities was populated into the IDS<sup>9</sup> for all of their outlying fields.

Hind sight being 20/20, he said that other than somehow providing better communications with aircraft, he would not have done anything differently.

Submitted by:

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Brian Soper  
Senior Air Traffic Control Investigator

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<sup>8</sup> FDIO – Flight Data Input/Output - A system utilized to distribute flight plan information, weather information, and general information to associated Air Traffic Control facilities across the National Airspace System.

<sup>9</sup> IDS – Information Display System - A system that provides the ATC environment with a single point of access to static data, such as documents, lists, and maps, and to dynamic data, such as weather display systems or automated tools with quick accessibility to the controller.