

**NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD**  
Vehicle Recorders Division  
Washington, D.C. 20594

July 3, 2000

**Audio Tape**

**Specialist's Factual Report  
by Anna W. Cushman**

**A. ACCIDENT**

Location: Aberdeen, South Dakota  
Date: October 25, 1999  
Time: About 1713 UTC (universal coordinated time)  
Aircraft: Learjet 35, N47BA  
NTSB Number: DCA00MA005

**B. GROUP**           No Group.

**C. SUMMARY**

On October 25, 1999 a Learjet 35, N47BA, impacted terrain near Aberdeen, South Dakota. Magnetic tape was found at the accident site and given to the National Transportation Safety Board. The tape was brought to the Safety Board's audio laboratory in Washington, DC on June 21, 2000 for examination.

**D. DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION**

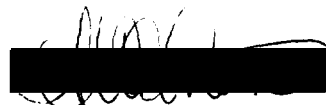
On October 25, 1999 a Learjet 35, N47BA, departed Orlando, Florida on an IFR flight plan to Dallas, Texas. After departing Orlando, the en-route air traffic controller cleared N47BA to climb and maintain 39,000 feet. N47BA immediately acknowledged the request - this was the last communication from the accident aircraft.

The aircraft continued on its course until 1713 UTC, at which time it crashed near Aberdeen, South Dakota.

Magnetic tape was recovered from the accident site and given to the audio lab for further examination. The 1/8-inch tape was determined to be audio tape, similar to the tape used in music cassettes and audio microcassettes. The tape was untangled and found to be in five separate pieces of varying length, totally approximately 30 feet.

Each side of each section of tape was visually examined using Magna-See. Magna-See is a liquid solution that visually enhances, without altering, the signal recorded on magnetic tape. The tape did not show any visual evidence of recorded data.

The tape sections were mounted onto cassette reels and played in a cassette player at various speeds. Each side of the tape and all possible audio tracks were played. There was no audible evidence of recorded audio data on any of the five sections of tape. After performing a visual and aural examination of the magnetic audio tape, it was determined that the tape did not contain any audio information.

  
[Redacted]  
Anna W. Cushman *trj*  
Aerospace Engineer *for*