

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Vehicle Recorder Division
Washington, D.C. 20594

April 15, 2011

Computer Data

Specialist's Factual Report By Doug Brazy

1. EVENT SUMMARY

Location: Aleknagik, Alaska
Date: August 9, 2009
Time: 1445 Alaska daylight time (ADT)
Aircraft: de Havilland DHC-3T
Registration: N455A
Operator: General Communication Corporation
NTSB Number: ANC10MA068

On August 9, 2010, about 1442 Alaska daylight time (ADT), a single engine, turbine-powered, amphibious float-equipped de Havilland DHC-3T airplane, N455A, impacted mountainous tree-covered terrain about 10 miles northeast of Aleknagik, Alaska. Of the nine people aboard, the airline transport pilot and four passengers died at the scene, and four passengers sustained serious injuries. The airplane sustained substantial damage. The flight was operated by General Communication, Incorporated (GCI), Anchorage, Alaska, under the provisions of 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Part 91. The flight originated at a GCI-owned remote fishing lodge on the southwest shoreline of Lake Nerka about 1427 and was en route to a remote sport fishing camp on the banks of the Nushagak River, about 52 miles southeast of the GCI lodge. At the time of the accident, marginal visual meteorological conditions were reported at the Dillingham Airport, about 18 miles south of the accident site; however, the weather conditions at the accident site at that time are not known. No flight plan was filed.

Two desktop computers were recovered from the GCI fishing lodge, and sent to the NTSB laboratory for examination.

2. COMPUTER DATA GROUP

A group was not convened.

3. DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION

3.1. Items received

On September August 19, 2009, the Safety Board's Vehicle Recorder Division received the following:

1. Manufacturer/Model: Dell Optiplex 755 Computer
Serial Number: HH617G1
2. Manufacturer/Model: Dell Optiplex 755 Computer
Serial Number: 407YXC1

One computer was labeled "Bergt's Cabin", the other "Dining Hall".

3.2. Device Description

Both computers were manufactured by Dell, and had the Windows XP operating system installed. Each contained a single hard disk drive.

3.3. Description of Recording Contents

Both computers were examined for evidence of internet browser usage on the day of the accident (8/9/2010). They were examined for any history or cache files associated with Microsoft Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, and Google Chrome.

The internet activity was reviewed for indications of visits to any sites with weather related information.

History Files

History files store a record of URL's¹ visited by the browser, and the date and time the visit was made.

Browser history files indicated internet activity occurred on the day of the accident: 1) on the "Bergt's Cabin" computer, using Internet Explorer, and 2) on the "Dining Hall" computer, using Mozilla Firefox. The username used for the activity on both computers was "agulowok".

Cache Files

Internet browsers typically store cache files for some period of time, in order to increase the speed/performance of the browser. This is accomplished by retaining some files such as the pictures, sounds or text viewed on a visited website, and saving them locally on the computer's hard disk drive. The next time the browser visits a previously accessed website, it can load those cached files from the hard disk drive, instead of downloading them again from the website, if appropriate. In general, these files are placed in a temporary location with a fixed size allocation, and can be overwritten by newer or different cache files as the browser is subsequently used. Both computers appear to have been in use for several days after the accident date.

On the "Bergt's Cabin" computer, some cache files were recovered that had been either accessed or modified on 8/9/2010.

There were no cache files that were either accessed or modified on 8/9/10 on the "Dining Hall" computer.

3.4. Data Recovered

The following URLs and cache file were identified by Meteorology Group Chairman for this accident investigation, as the only relevant weather related information recovered from the computers. All times are Alaska Daylight Time (ADT).

¹ Uniform Resource Locater – e.g. website names, or paths to files or information that the browser retrieves.

URL lists:

Activity from the "Dining Hall" computer

(0740:01 AM) <http://aawu.arh.noaa.gov/>
(0740:19 AM) <http://aawu.arh.noaa.gov/clickmap/bristol.html>
(0740:25 AM) <http://pafc.arh.noaa.gov/obs.php?stnid=PADL>
(0741:23 AM) <http://pafc.arh.noaa.gov/obs.php?stnid=PAMB>
(0741:44 AM) <http://pafc.arh.noaa.gov/obs.php?stnid=PALV>
(0741:52 AM) <http://pafc.arh.noaa.gov/tafobs.php?stnid=PADL>
(0742:28 AM) <http://pafc.arh.noaa.gov/obs.php?stnid=PALV>
(0745:01 AM) <http://pafc.arh.noaa.gov/obs.php?stnid=PADL>

Activity from "Bergt's Cabin" computer

(1132:13 AM) aawu.arh.noaa.gov
(1132:59 AM) pafc.arh.noaa.gov
(1132:59 AM) http://pafc.arh.noaa.gov/home_sfcmap.php?Z=12
(1133:25 AM) <http://aawu.arh.noaa.gov/surface.php>
(1133:26 AM) <http://aawu.arh.noaa.gov/index.php>

Cache File:

One relevant cache file was noted, "sfcmap12[1].jpg" which is an image file, a copy of which appears below.

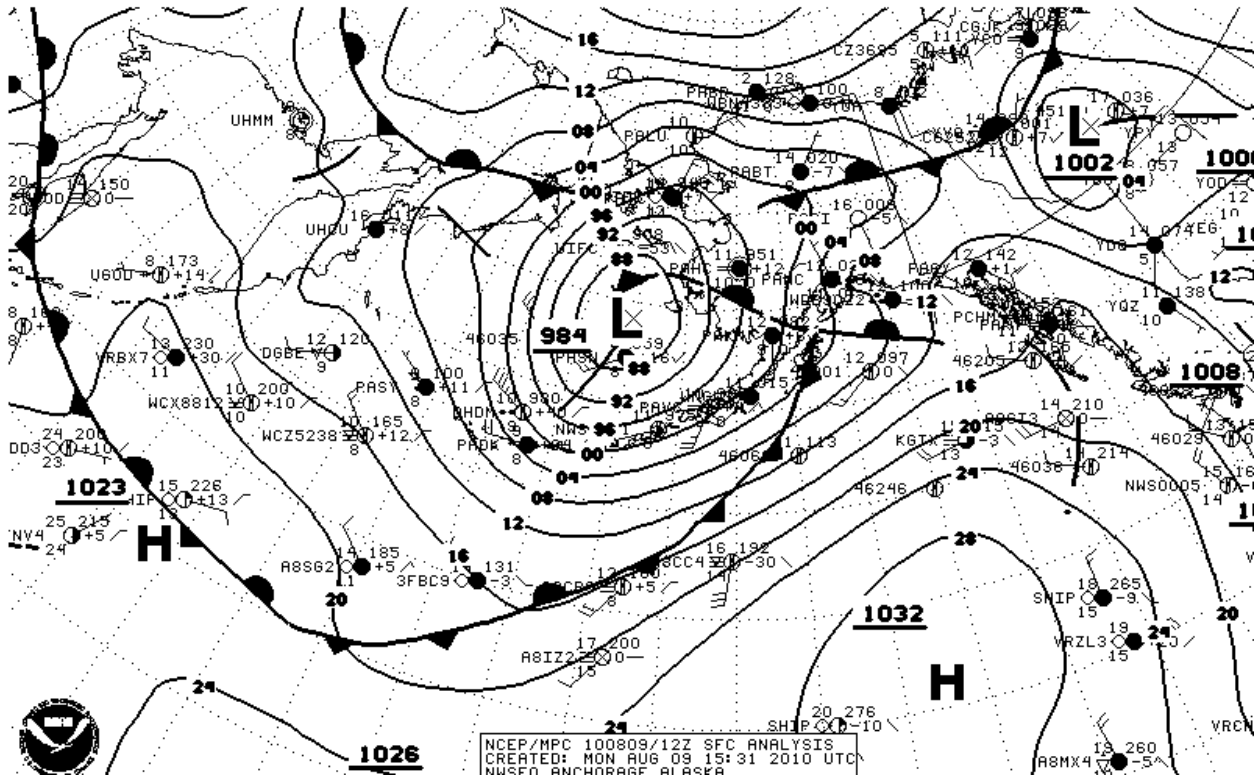


Figure 1 - Cache File "sfcmap[1].jpg"

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