



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Washington, D.C. 20594

August 19, 2014

Factual Report

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

CEN14FA110

A. AIRCRAFT INCIDENT

Location: Pontiac, Michigan

Date: January 10, 2014

Time: 1948 eastern standard time (EST) / 0048 coordinated universal time (UTC)¹, January 11, 2014

Aircraft: N3829G, a Cessna 310R, operating as Royal Air Freight (RAX) flight 907

¹All times are expressed in eastern standard time (EST) unless otherwise noted.

B. AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL GROUP

No air traffic control group was formed for this investigation.

C. SUMMARY

On January 10, 2014, about 1948 eastern standard time, a Cessna 310R, N3829G, impacted trees and terrain about 1,500 feet west of the approach end of runway 9R (6,521 feet by 150 feet, asphalt) at Oakland County International Airport (PTK), Pontiac, Michigan, during an instrument landing system (ILS) approach to the runway. Night instrument meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The airplane was destroyed by impact forces and post impact fire. The commercial pilot sustained fatal injuries. The airplane was registered to and operated by Royal Air Freight, Inc. as flight 907 under 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91. The positioning flight was operating on an instrument rules flight plan and departed from Fulton County Airport-Brown Field (FTY), Atlanta, Georgia, about 1701, destined for PTK.

D. FACTUAL INFORMATION

1.0 History of Flight

RAX907 departed runway 8 at FTY at 1658 and was provided initial ATC radar service by Atlanta Terminal Radar Approach Control (A80 TRACON). RAX907 was provided ATC services by numerous TRACONs and air route traffic control centers (ARTCC) en-route before being transferred to Detroit TRACON (D21) at 1922. According to FAA transcripts, the flight was uneventful.

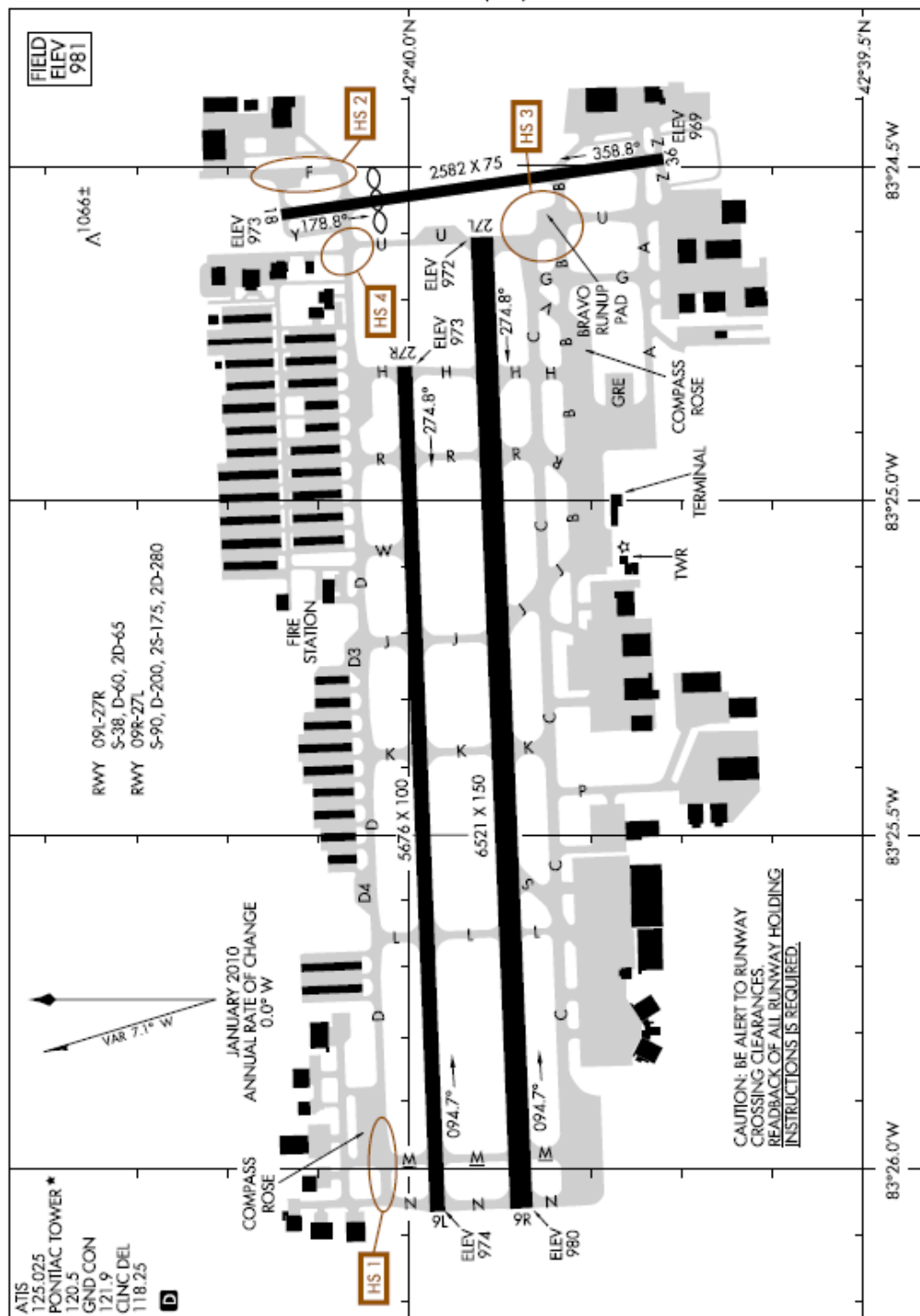
RAX907 checked in with D21 at 1922 descending out of 4,900 feet for 4,000 feet. RAX907 was provided radar vectors for the ILS runway 9R approach. After being given a descent to 3000 feet and a final radar vector to a heading of 060 degrees, the D21 controller cleared RAX907 for the ILS runway 9R approach at 1940, and two minutes later directed the pilot to contact PTK tower on frequency 120.5. (see figures 1 and 2)

RAX907 checked in with the PTK air traffic control tower (ATCT) at 1942 and was issued a landing clearance to runway 9R following a Challenger on a 2 mile final. RAX907 was issued a runway visual range (RVR) of 2000 feet for runway 9R. RAX907 acknowledged the landing clearance and advised they were looking for the traffic. The controller issued the surface wind. There were no further communications between RAX907 and ATC. (see figures 3 and 4)

13346

AIRPORT DIAGRAM

AL-5052 (FAA)

OAKLAND COUNTY INTL (PTK)
PONTIAC, MICHIGAN

AIRPORT DIAGRAM

13346

PONTIAC, MICHIGAN
OAKLAND COUNTY INTL (PTK)

Figure 1 – PTK Airport Diagram

PONTIAC, MICHIGAN

AL-5052 (FAA)

LOC I-PTK 111.1	APP CRS 092°	Rwy Idg 6520 TDZE 980 Apt Elev 980
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ILS or LOC RWY 9R
OAKLAND COUNTY INTL (PTK)

⚠ *RVR 1800 authorized with the use of FD or AP or HUD to DA.
When local altimeter setting not received, use Coleman A. Young Muni
altimeter setting and increase DA 105 feet and all MDA 120 feet,
increase S-LOC 9R Cats C and D visibility ½ mile, circling Cat B visibility
¼ mile, Cats C and D visibility ½ mile.



MISSED APPROACH: Climb to 1600,
then climbing right turn to 3000 direct
SVM VORTAC and hold.

ATIS
125.025

DETROIT APP CON
127.5 363.2

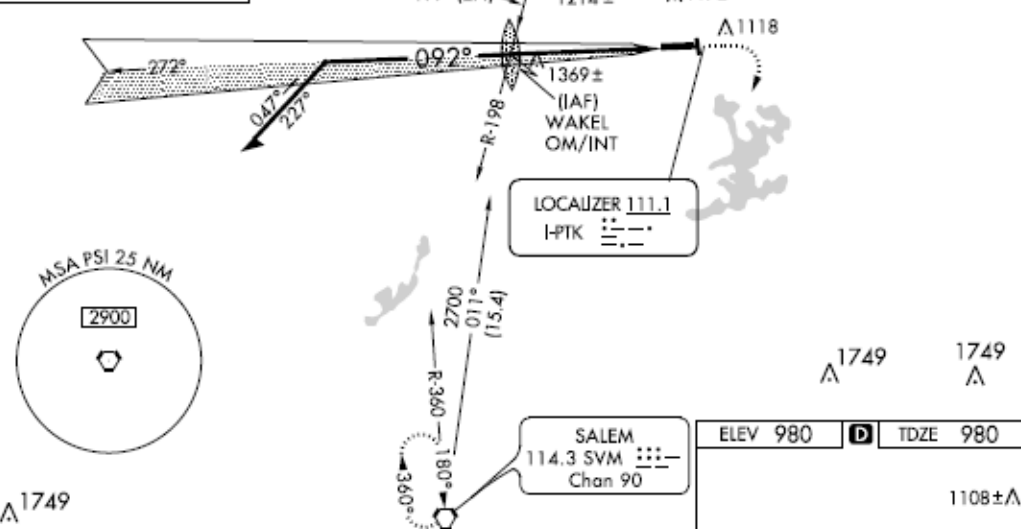
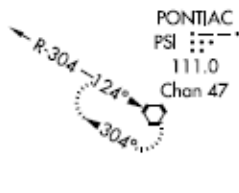
PONTIAC TOWER*
120.5 (CTAF) 0

GND CON
121.9

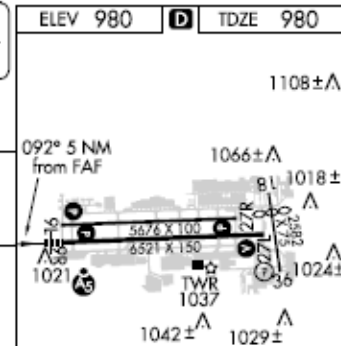
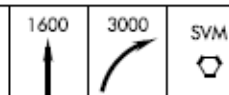
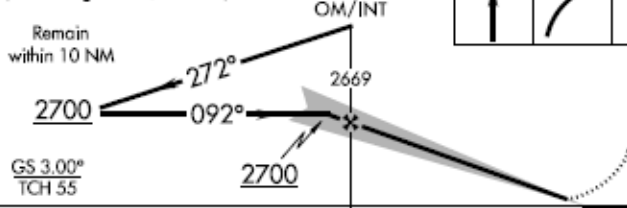
CLNC DEL
118.25

UNICOM
122.95

ALTERNATE
MISSED APCH FIX



VGSI and ILS glidepath not coincident
(VGSI Angle 3.00/TCH 45).



CATEGORY	A	B	C	D
S-ILS 9R	*1180/24		200 (200-½)	
S-LOC 9R	1620/24	640 (700-½)	1620/60 640 (700-1¼)	1620-1½ 640 (700-1½)
CIRCLING	1620-1	640 (700-1)	1620-1¾ 640 (700-1¾)	1640-2 660 (700-2)

PONTIAC, MICHIGAN
Amdt 12 13346

42°40'N - 83°25'W

OAKLAND COUNTY INTL (PTK)
ILS or LOC RWY 9R

Figure 2 – ILS Runway 9R at PTK

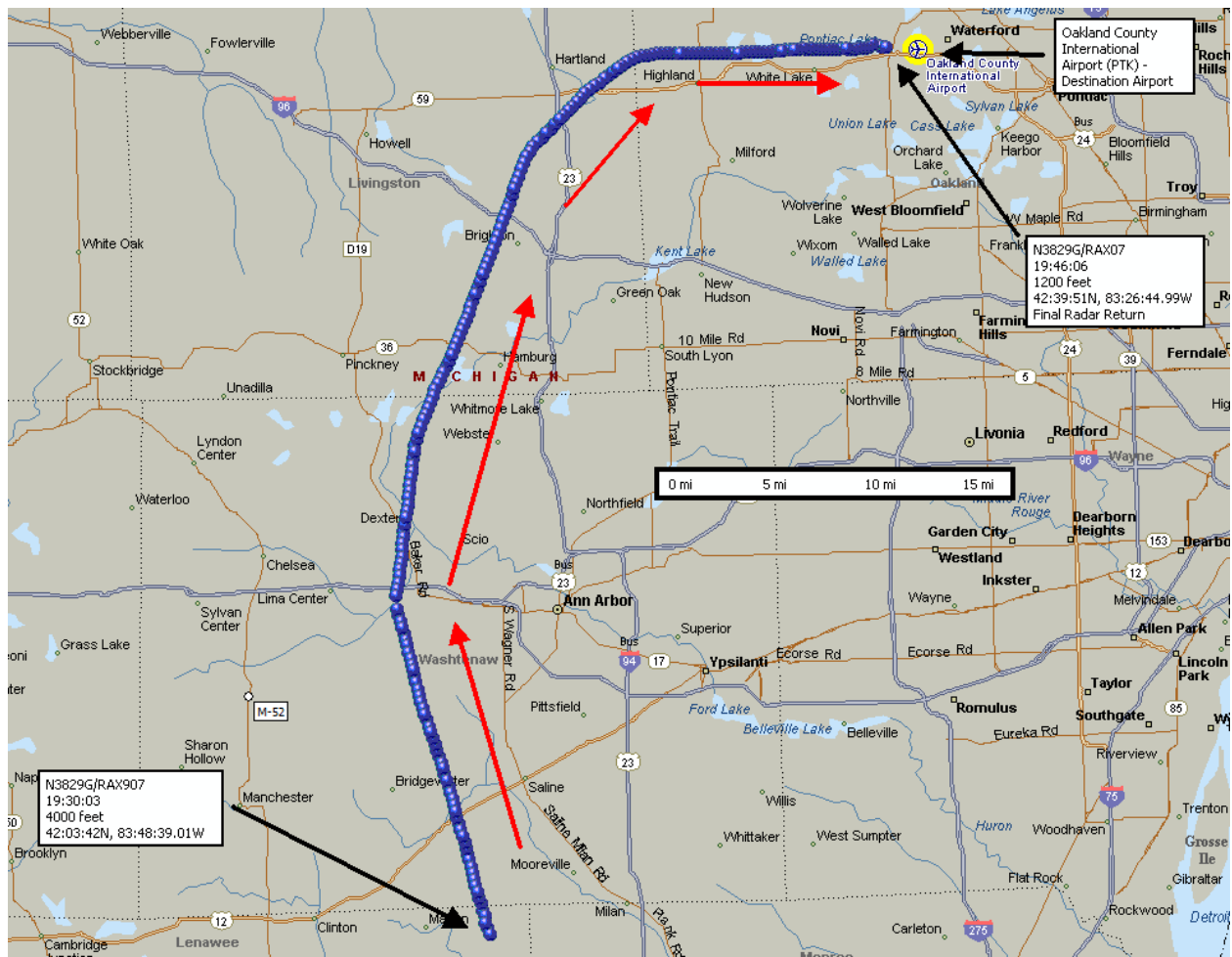


Figure 3 – Radar flight track of N3829G/RAX907 from 1930 to the final radar return. The flight path indicated by blue dots. Direction of flight is indicated by red arrows.

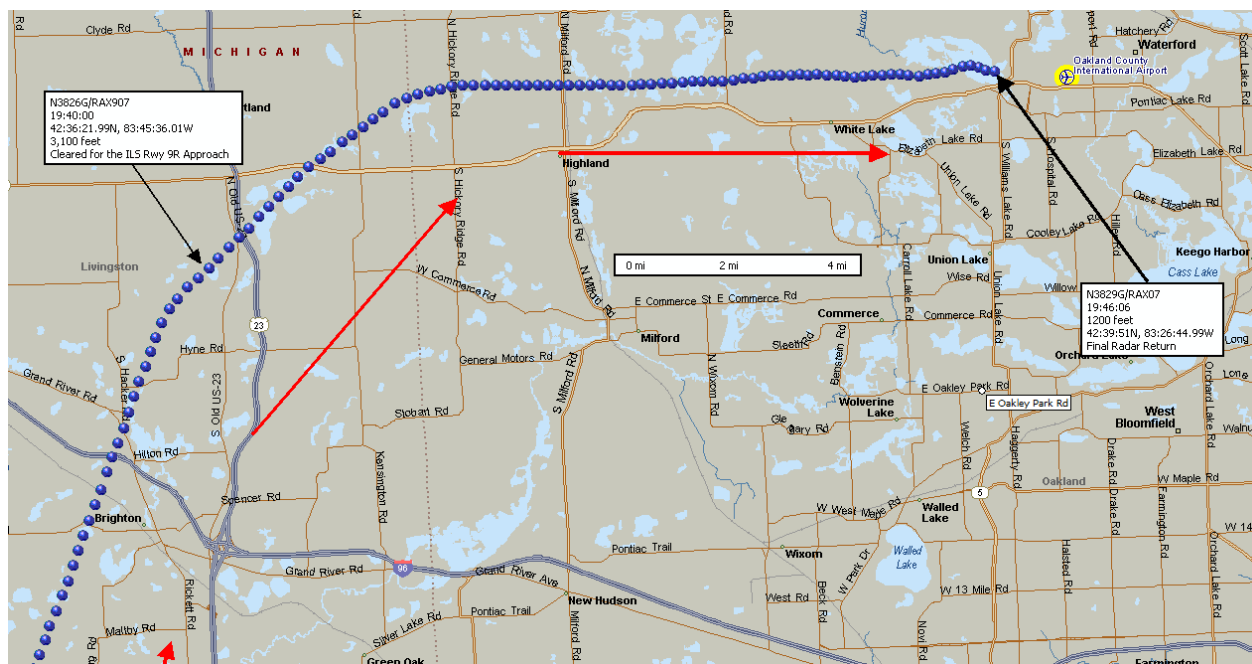


Figure 4 – Radar flight track of N3829G/RAX907. The flight path is indicated by blue dots. Direction of flight is indicated by red arrows.

2.0 Weather Information

The 1929 special Aviation Routine Weather Report (METAR) observation for PTK was wind 150 degrees at 10 knots, visibility $\frac{1}{4}$ statute mile, runway 09R visual range varied between 2000 and 2800 feet in fog, vertical visibility 200 feet above ground level (agl), temperature 2 degrees C, dew point 1 degree C, altimeter 29.86 inches of mercury

The 1953 METAR observation for PTK was wind 140 degrees at 9 knots, visibility $\frac{1}{4}$ statute mile, runway 09R visual range variable between 200 and 2600 feet in fog. Vertical visibility 200 feet agl, temperature 2 degrees C, dew point 2 degrees C, altimeter 29.86 inches of mercury.

3.0 Air Traffic Control

RAX907 checked in with the PTK air traffic control tower (ATCT) at 1942, nine miles from PTK, and was issued a landing clearance to runway 9R to follow a Challenger on a 2 mile final. RAX907 was issued a runway visual range (RVR) of 2000 feet for runway 9R. RAX907 acknowledged the landing clearance and the controller issued the surface wind.

At 1948:16 the PTK tower controller asked RAX907 to “say your position” without response. 15 seconds later the local controller transmitted “air royal nine zero seven pontiac tower how do you hear?” There was no response. The tower controller advised D21 that RAX907 could not be located and advised the D21 controller that a succeeding arrival on the tower frequency, RAX270, was being transferred back to D21 because the preceding aircraft, RAX907, could not be located. The tower notified Oakland County Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) of a potential aircraft crash. The airport was closed and the ILS was taken out of service. The airport reopened at 2148.

ATC radar source data was acquired from the Detroit airport surveillance radar (ASR-9) located at 42:28:05N/-83:33:51W. ATC audio was from D21 and PTK ATCT.

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