



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

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October 29, 2019

Subject: NTSB investigation ERA19LA026, N555PM, Piper PA-31T Atlantic Ocean (about 100 miles southeast of Charleston, South Carolina, October 25, 2018).

The information was below excerpted from Federal Aviation Administration air traffic control recordings. The audio files used (which are available in the public docket) were:

N555PM R71 10-25-2018.wav
N555PM R52 10-25-2018.wav
N555PM D52 10-25-2018.wav

Air Traffic Control Audio Recordings – Excerpted transmissions and notations.

Legend:

mm:ssET – Elapsed minutes and seconds in the digital audio file

(~hhmm:ss z) - approximate UTC time based on synchronization of common events in the audio files, and the UTC time provided in the radar video file "ZJX N555PM R52 10-25-18 1510-1530Z.MP4"

[text] - Editorial comment

(text) - sounds like / questionable transcription

* - unintelligible word or phrase

hh:mm:ss RADAR DATA [text] - annotation about radar data

***R71 Position Jacksonville air route traffic control center recording (1452 to 1530z) filename
"N555PM R71 10-25-2018.wav"***

02:44ET (1453:57 z) [two controllers discussing handoff info] R71: five papa mike needs routing, right now he's going to hit whiskey area so I was just gonna put him on a heading and hand him off to fifty-two.

05:58ET (1457:11 z) R71: navajo five papa mike I've got routing for you into governor's harbor, let me know when you're are ready

06:05ET (1457:18 z) N555PM: five papa mike ready to copy

06:06ET (1457:19 z) R71: november five five five papa mike uh to avoid military airspace cleared direct LURKS, lima uniform romeo kilo sierra, direct CARPX, charlie alpha romeo papa x-ray, AR3 to NUCAR , and then direct.

06:30ET (1457:43 z) N555PM: [unintelligible] that's direct to uh, LURKS, uh, direct to uh, uh A R P E, uh A R three [unintelligible] R, and direct to destination.

06:44ET (1457:57 z) R71: That was correct except for after LURKS, its direct CARPX, charlie alpha romeo papa x-ray

06:52ET (1458:05 z) N555PM: roger CARPX, then apha.. uh, AR three, direct to NUCAR.

07:44ET (1458:57 z) R71: november five five five papa mike, climb and maintain flight level two two zero.

07:49ET (1459:02 z) N555PM: up to two two zero, five papa mike, we're out of fifteen point two.

09:30ET(1500:43 z) R52 to R71: hey five papa mike can not come out here unless he can get up to twenty five. [this transmission occurs at 32:36ET in file "N555PM R52 10-25-2018.wav"]

09:34ET (1500:47 z) R71 to R52: [unintelligible] hot?

09:35:ET (1500:48 z) R52 to R71: yea further to the south.

09:37ET (1500:50 z) R71: five papa mike can you accept flight level two five zero?

09:43ET (1500:56 z) uh roger that for five papa mike. Up to two five zero?

09:46ET (1500:59 z) november five papa mike, affirmative. climb and maintain flight level two five zero.

09:50ET (1501:03 z) up to two five zero, five papa mike.

11:09ET (1502:22 z) R71: november five papa mike contact Jacksonville center, one three five point zero five, take care.

11:15ET (1502:28 z) N555PM: one thee five point zero five, five papa mike, good day.

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R52 Position Jacksonville air route traffic control center recording (1430 to 1530z) filename "N555PM R52 10-25-2018.wav"

10:52ET (~1438:59z) [first indication of the partial ELT 'squeaking' type noise. this noise occurs intermittently every few seconds from this time until 56:13ET (~1524:20z). some, but not all of these sounds are individually transcribed below]

34:40ET (~1502:47z) N555PM: [initial contact with this controller] N555PM: Jacksonville center, cheyenne 555 papa mike with you, out of eighteen for two five oh.

39:18ET (~1507:25z) [two controllers discussing N555pm altitude and routing]

40:44ET (~1508:51z) [R52 controller calls N555PM to issue lost communication procedures, N555PM reads back the procedures]

42:19ET (~1510:26z) R52: readback correct. [this transmission begins at 1510:26Z in the video playback file "ZJX N555PM R52 10-25-18 1510-1530Z.MP4"]

48:49ET (~1516:56z) N555PM: five five five papa mike um * * * (emergency) [background noise level is louder than previous transmissions]

48:59ET (~1517:06z) R52: November five papa mike, I'm sorry, you're coming in broken, say that again?

49:09ET (~1517:16z) R52: November five papa mike, you're coming in broken, say again?

49:12ET (~1517:19) N555PM: * * (we're descending) [loud background noise]

49:14ET (~1517:21z) [N555PM keyed microphone for about 2 seconds, loud background noise like previous transmission]

49:19ET (~1517:26z) [N555PM keyed microphone for about 11 seconds, loud background noise like previous, sound of unintelligible yelling far away from microphone]

49:31ET (~1517:38z) R52: november five papa mike understand you are in a descent, altitude's at your discretion, when able uh, turn back to the north or west and let me know what's going on, your coming in very broken right now, can't understand you.

15:17:50 RADAR DATA: [Last radar position that has altitude (21,500)]

49:47ET (~1517:54z) R52: jet blue three sixty nine were you able to make out any of the last transmission on frequency.

49:54ET (~1518:01z) JB369: negative.

50:07ET (~1518:14z) N3GR: ...last I heard from him was uh, descending, emergency, into um, Charleston.

50:18ET (~1518:25z) R52: november five papa mike, understand you are going back to Charleston, altitude's your discretion and I've lost your uh, altitude.

50:26ET (~1518:33z) N555PM: emerg-ency emergency five-five papa mike [partially broken transmission, loud background noise like previous transmission]

50:30ET (~1518:37z) R52: November five papa mike roger, understand emergency.

15:18:50 RADAR DATA: [last radar position, this and previous 2 have the beacon response but the altitude is 0]

50:59ET (~1519:06z) november five five five papa mike, radar contact lost

51:36ET (~1519:43z) [R52 notifies someone (appears to be another controller) of the emergency and loss of radar/radio advising she doesn't know the location but they might pick him up as he travels west (toward Charleston)]

52:14ET (~1520:21z) [R52 attempts to reach N555PM unsuccessfully]

51:37ET (~1519:44z) [squeaks like partial ELT again, during R52 transmission to another controller]

51:54ET (~1520:01z) [squeaks like partial ELT again, during R52 transmission to another airplane]

52:05ET (~1520:12z) [loud full signal ELT for a few seconds]

52:36ET (~1520:43z) [about 20 seconds of squeaks like partial ELT]

53:01ET (~1521:08z) [R52 asks United 1898 to transmit in the blind and see if they can hear N555PM, they try, no success]

54:08ET (~1522:15z) [R52 briefing to relief controller, including that supervisors already know about N555PM]

54:14ET (~1522:21z) [several seconds of squeaks like partial ELT]

54:47ET (~1522:54z) [several seconds of squeaks like partial ELT]

55:15ET (~1523:22z) [several seconds of squeaks like partial ELT]

55:29ET (~1523:36z) [R52 controller appears to handoff position to a new controller]

55:50ET (~1523:57z) [several seconds of squeaks like partial ELT]

56:13ET (~1524:20z) [Last occurrence of squeaks like partial ELT, during a transmission from NewR52 to military aircraft responding to area]

55:51ET (~1523:58z) [NewR52: asks pirate42 if they could fly lower and have a look, the location given was relative, 1 o'clock 58 miles. Pirate42 was involved in refueling]

59:07ET (~1527:14z) [NewR52 controller has previously asked a military airplane to head toward the last contact for accident airplane and see if anything visible on the water. At this time, NewR52 asked that airplane to monitor 121.5 for any ELT signals]

01:01:55ET (~1530:02z) [end of this audio recording]

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D52 position at Jacksonville air route traffic control center recording (1450 to 1550z) filename "N555PM D52 10-25-2018.wav"

47:47ET [another airplane reporting oil spill on the water. UTC time not calculated. Estimated to be about 1537 based on recording duration]

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