

AAIPU# A12-01285



AIR ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION AND PREVENTION UNIT CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT

NASSAU, N. P., BAHAMAS

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT



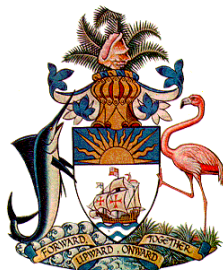
LOSS OF CONTROL & UNCONTROLLED FLIGHT INTO TERRAIN
BEECH B36TC

N6703K

IN WATERS BETWEEN GREAT HARBOUR CAY,
AND SOUTH ABACO, BAHAMAS

JULY 16, 2012





**Bahamas Department of Civil Aviation
Air Accident Investigation and Prevention Unit
P. O. Box AP-59244
Lynden Pindling International Airport
Nassau N. P., Bahamas**

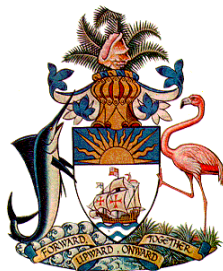
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Abstract: This report outlines the circumstances involving the accident of Van Auto Inc. aircraft N6703K a Beech B36TC aircraft which crashed in waters between South Abaco and the northern Berry Islands after departing Marsh Harbour International Airport, Marsh Harbour, Abaco, Bahamas on July 16, 2012.



Bahamas Department of Civil Aviation Air Accident Investigation and Prevention Unit

The Air Accident Investigation and Prevention Unit (AAIPU) is the accident investigation unit of the Bahamas Civil Aviation Department (BCAD).

The AAIPU's function is to promote and improve safety and public confidence in the aviation industry through excellence in:

- independent investigation of aviation accidents and other safety occurrences
- safety data recording, analysis and research
- fostering safety awareness, knowledge and action.

The AAIPU does not investigate for the purpose of apportioning blame or to provide a means for determining liability.

The AAIPU performs its functions in accordance with the provisions of the *Bahamas Civil Aviation (Safety) (Amendment) Regulations (CASAR) 2010, Schedule 19, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Annex 13* and, where applicable, relevant international agreements.

The Civil Aviation Department is mandated by the Ministry of Transportation and Aviation to investigate air transportation accidents and incidents, determine probable causes of accidents and incidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues and evaluate the safety effectiveness of agencies and stakeholders involved in air transportation.

The AAIPU makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations and safety alerts. When the AAIPU issues a safety recommendation, the person, organization or agency must provide a written response within 90 days. That response must indicate whether the person, organization or agency accepts the recommendation, any reasons for not accepting part or all of the recommendation, and details of any proposed safety action to give effect to the recommendation.

Copies of accident reports can be obtained by contacting:

Captain Patrick L. Rolle
Director
Bahamas Department of Civil Aviation
P. O. Box N975
Nassau N. P., Bahamas
(242) 326-0339/40

August 7, 2012

Captain Patrick L. Rolle
Director
Bahamas Civil Aviation Department
P.O. Box N-975
Nassau, N.P.,
Bahamas

Sir

I am duty-bound to submit this report on the circumstances of the fatal accident involving N6703K, a Beech B36TC aircraft, registered in the United States to Van Auto Inc., and operated by Mr. Alan Van Nimwegen, Port Orange, Florida, USA. This accident occurred on July 16, 2012 at 9:40am local time (1340 UTC) in waters between the Northern Berry Islands and South Abaco, Bahamas.

This report is submitted pursuant to Part XII, Regulation 80, and Schedule 19 of the Bahamas Civil Aviation (Safety)(Amendment) Regulation (CASR 2010) and in accordance with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

In accordance with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (ICAO), and Schedule 19 of the Bahamas Civil Aviation (Safety)(Amendment) Regulations (CASAR), the fundamental purpose of such investigations is to determine the circumstances and causes of these events, with a view to the preservation of life and the avoidance of similar occurrences in the future. It is not the purpose of such investigations to apportion blame or liability.

This report contains facts which have been determined up to the time of publication. Information is published to inform the aviation industry and the public of the circumstances surrounding this accident. The contents of this report may be subjected to alterations or corrections if additional factual information becomes available.

Regards



Delvin R. Major
Investigator in Charge
Air Accident Investigation and Prevention Unit
Bahamas Department of Civil Aviation
Lynden Pindling International Airport
Nassau, N. P., Bahamas



BAHAMAS CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT
AIR ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION AND PREVENTION UNIT

TITLE

Registered Owner: Van Auto Inc.

Operator: Mr. Alan Van Nimwegen

Manufacturer: Beech Aircraft Company

Aircraft Type: Beech Model 36TC

Nationality: United States

Registration: N6703K

Place of Accident: In waters between the Northern Berry Islands and Southern Abaco, Bahamas

Date and Time: July 16, 2012 at 1340 UTC (9:40am DST)

Notification: DCA, NTSB, ICAO, FAA

Investigating Authority: Civil Aviation Department
Air Accident Investigation and Prevention Unit

Investigator in Charge: Mr. Delvin R. Major

Accredited Representatives: Mr. Eric Alleyne – NTSB (Non-travelling)

Releasing Authority: Civil Aviation Department, Nassau, N. P., Bahamas

Date of Report Publication: August 8, 2012

Factual Report

On July 16, 2012 about 1340 UTC / 9:40am Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), N6703K a turbo-prop, fixed wing, single-engine aircraft Beech B36TC registered to Van Auto Inc., and operated by Alan Van Nimwegen crashed in waters between the Northern Berry Islands and Southern Abaco Island, Bahamas after departing Marsh Harbour International Airport, Marsh Harbour Abaco, Bahamas.

The aircraft was a private flight from Marsh Harbour International Airport (MYAM), Marsh Harbour, Bahamas to Daytona Beach International Airport (KDAB), Florida, USA. The aircraft was on an instrument flight rules (IFR) flight plan with a filed altitude of 12,000ft, the filed route was Marsh Harbour direct COMET intersection direct Daytona Beach. The aircraft estimated time enroute of one hour and fifty minutes. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The flight plan was filed the day before on July 15, 2012, when asked whether he wanted a weather update, the pilot indicated that he will get an update the following morning. However, there is no evidence to verify whether the pilot received an updated weather report prior to departure on July 16, 2012.

The airplane is believed to have been destroyed as a result of uncontrolled flight into terrain, as items from the aircraft (which were later used to establish the identity of the aircraft) were later recovered by the United States Coast Guard. The pilot Mr. Alan Van Nimwegen D.O.B June 17, 1946 and his wife Kathleen Van Nimwegen D.O.B September 7th, 1950 of 1816 Wright Dr. Port Orange Florida were believed to be the only occupants on the aircraft at the time of the accident. It is believed they both received fatal injuries.

The official notification of the accident was made to the Bahamas Civil Aviation Department Air Accident Investigation & Prevention Unit at Lynden Pindling Int'l Airport, Nassau, N. P., Bahamas where investigations began immediately.

Mr. Alan Van Nimwegen was listed as the pilot in command on the flight plan form filed with Miami Lockheed Martin Flight Service. He was the holder of a valid United States Private Pilot Certificate issued on February 22nd, 2008. He also held an airplane single and multi-engine land, instrument airplane category and class rating with no limitations. Mr. Van Nimwegen's total flying experience as well as experience on this particular aircraft is unknown.

Mr. Van Nimwegen was the holder of a United States third class medical certificate issued June 2012 with limitations that he wear lenses for distant and near vision.

N6703K was a turbo-prop, fixed-wing, single-engine beech model B36TC aircraft, serial number EA-372 manufactured in 1983. It had a corporate registration, with certificate being issued on June 28, 1994. It was registered to Van Auto Inc., at 901 High Mountains Road, North Haledon, New Jersey, 07508-2913. The airworthiness of N6703K was classified as standard in the utility category with certificate issued on August 08th, 1983.

Weather observations are transmitted in coordinated universal time / Zulu time (UTC / Z). Eastern Daylight Time is 4 hours behind UTC / Z time. Bahamas Meteorological Department at the Lynden Pindling International Airport issued the Bahamas Area Forecast which originated at 1200 UTC; dated July 16, 2012 valid for 12 hours from 1200 UTC reported under special features, a combination of a pair of upper level lows north and west of the area and weak tropical waves in the vicinity of southeast Bahamas influencing weather across isles throughout forecast period.

Under significant weather: All areas: Clouds were reported as few and scattered cumulonimbus and towering cumulus at 1,500 and 2,500 feet. In addition, clouds were also reported as occasionally scattered, variable, broken at 3,000ft and 5,000ft with tops to 7,000ft. Towering cumulus clouds were also reported with tops up to 18,000ft (FL180). Cumulonimbus clouds were reported with tops above 30,000ft (FL300).

There were few and scattered thundershowers with showers mainly in lines and clusters. Ceilings were below 1,500ft and visibility below 3 nautical miles (NM) in heavy thundershowers and rain showers. Moderate to severe turbulence was reported in the vicinity of the cumulonimbus and towering cumulus clouds.

Forecasted Upper Winds and Temperature for the same time period from 1200 UTC at the 10,000 feet level in the Northwestern Bahamas were winds 250° at 10 knots and temperature 08°C.

No discrepancies with navigational aids were known or reported. Communications were established between the pilot and Miami Center ATC after departing Marsh Harbour International Airport. Radar and radio contact was lost with the aircraft at 9:18am EDT at approximately 80 miles SE of Freeport, Bahamas. The aircraft had reported severe turbulence shortly before the loss of radar and radio contact.

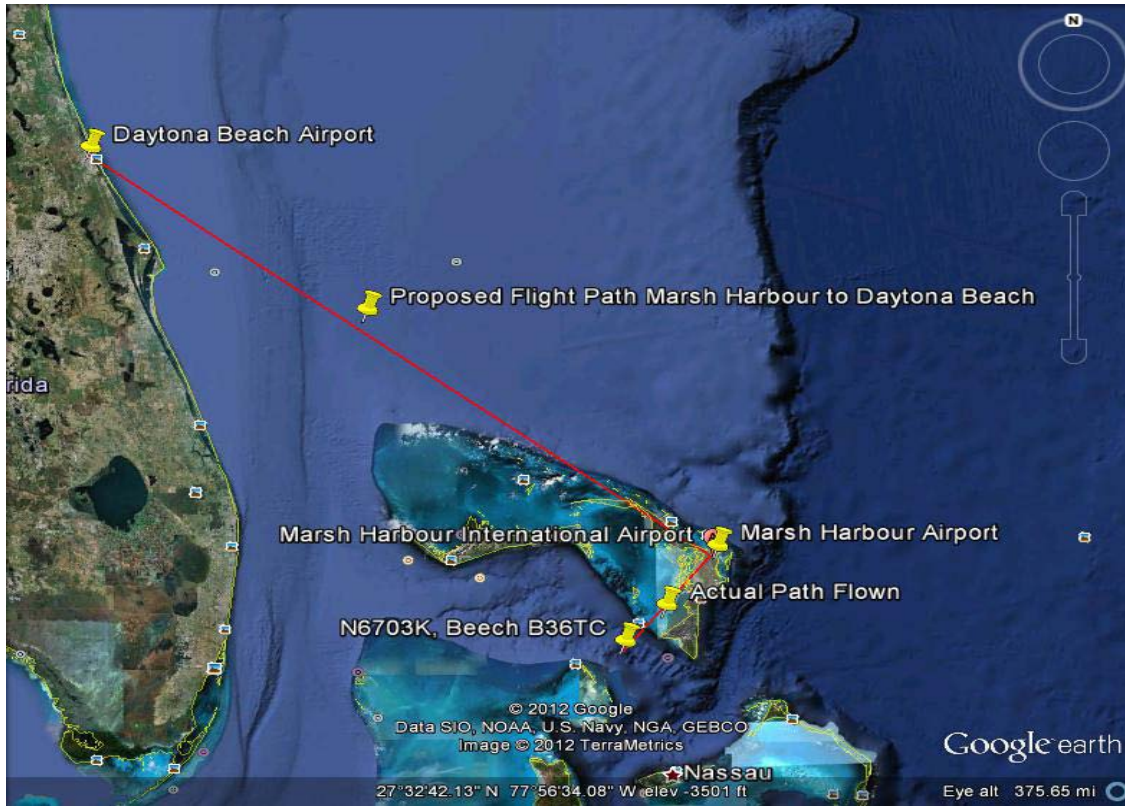
Miami Center ATC reported the aircraft possibly down approximately 47NM NNW of Nassau, Bahamas. A US Coast Guard (USCG) HC-130 diverted from its original mission and began to search the area. USCG also deployed its MH-60 helicopter to assist. A possible aircraft debris field was located at coordinates N 25° 50'04" and W077°42'56". Among the debris recovered included a life jacket, antenna and an oxygen tank. Additional debris recovered by the coast guard cutter Dolphin are what appeared to be a seat with a life vest on the back, what appeared to be pieces of a fuselage and what appeared to be various pieces of trash and a water jug.

Surface assets were provided by the Royal Bahamas Defence Force who located oil sheen southwest of the debris field. For the next few days after the accident surface and air searches were conducted using assets of the USCG as well as the Royal Bahamas Defence Force. Search conditions and efforts were hindered somewhat by thunderstorm activity in the immediate area of the missing aircraft. No survivors, remains or aircraft were found.

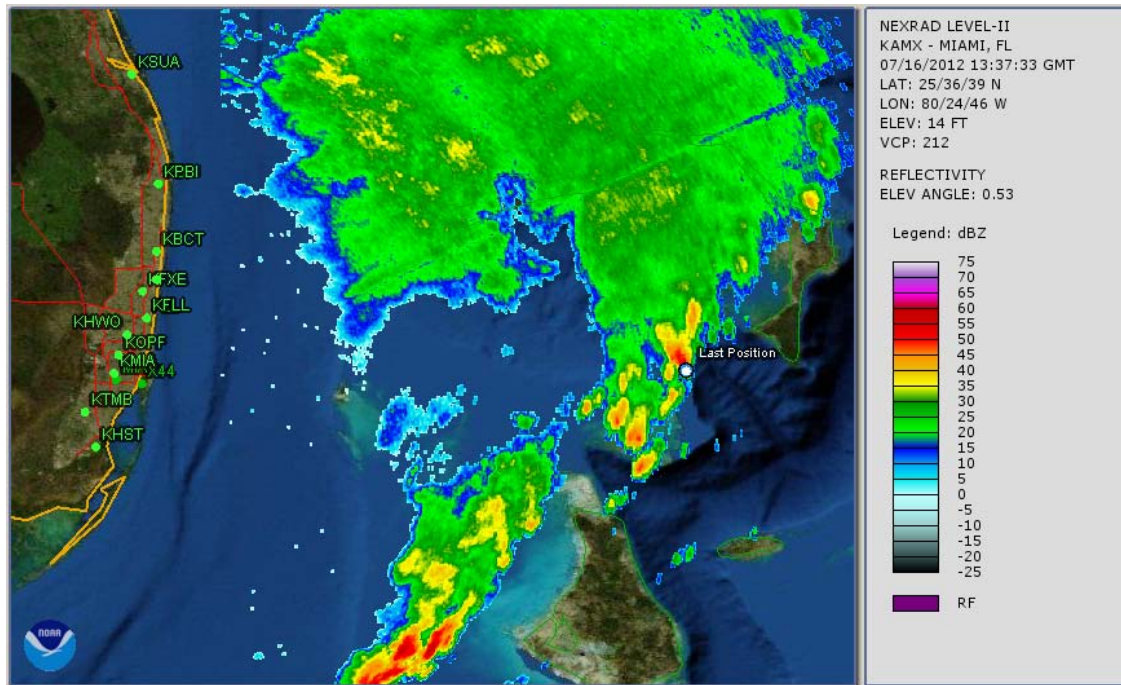
Based on the location of the debris field and the filed route, it appears the aircraft was diverting southwest of its planned northwest course to avoid massive thunderstorm activity in the vicinity of its proposed path. With the report of severe turbulence followed by the loss of communication and radar returns, it appears control was lost before the aircraft made contact with the terrain. It is believed that this uncontrolled flight into terrain was not survivable for the occupants of the aircraft. Weather has been considered as a contributing factor in the accident.

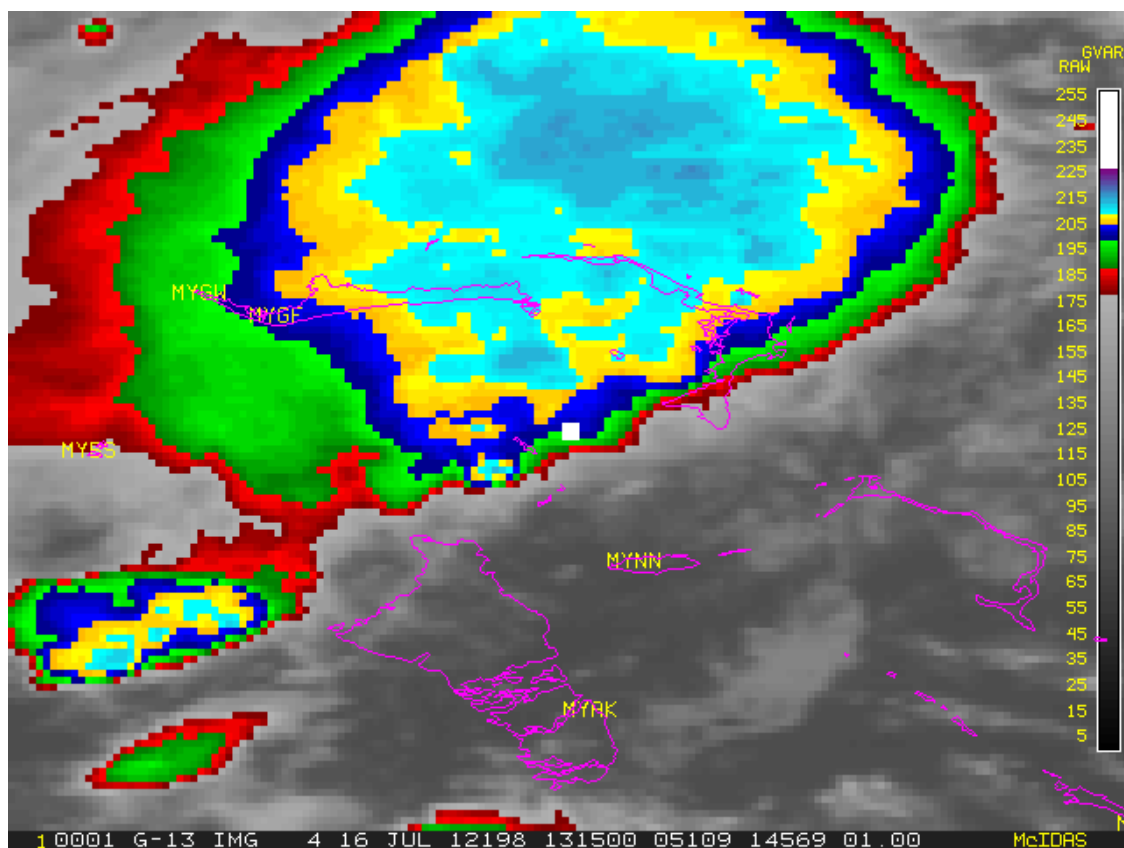
This case is considered closed as the search was terminated and no survivors, remains or significant portion of the aircraft were located that would be sufficient to conduct an investigation to determine the probable cause of the accident. In accordance with ICAO Annex 13 and Bahamas Civil Aviation Safety Amendment Regulations this case is subject to be reopened if significant information is received or the aircraft or its occupants are later recovered.

Proposed flight path from Marsh Harbour, Abaco to Daytona Beach, Florida as well as actual flight path up to the point of lost of contact between the Northern Berry Island and Southern Abaco.

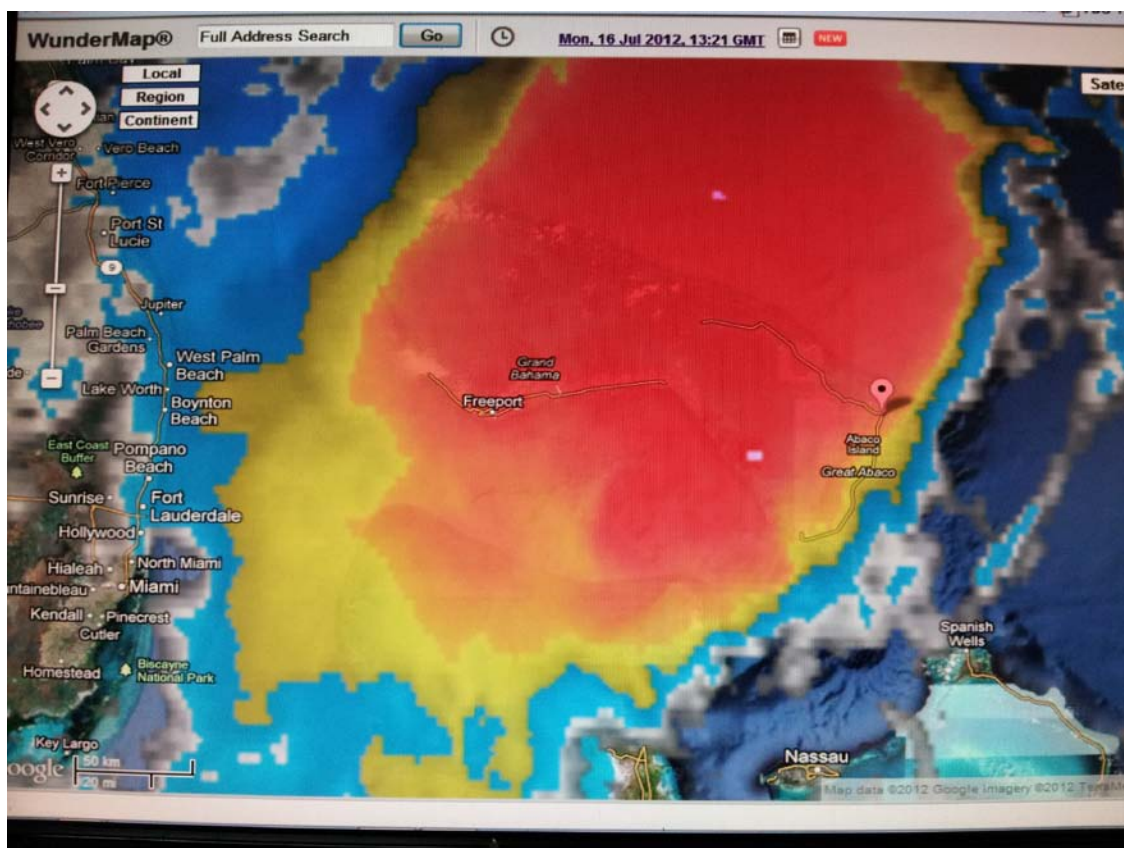


Weather over the Bahamas at the time of the accident and thereafter.





Additional satellite images showing weather in the Bahamas at the time of the accident.



Grid reference indicating cumulative searches conducted by assets search and rescue personnel in an effort to locate aircraft and occupants following the accident.

