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Interim Statement A-029/2012

Accident involving a Cessna 500 aircraft,
registration EC-IBA, operated by AIRNOR,
while on approach to the Santiago de
Compostela Airport (LEST)
on 2 August 2012



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SUBSECRETARÍA

COMISIÓN DE INVESTIGACIÓN
DE ACCIDENTES E INCIDENTES
DE AVIACIÓN CIVIL

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COMISIÓN DE INVESTIGACIÓN DE ACCIDENTES E INCIDENTES DE AVIACIÓN CIVIL

Tel.: +34 91 597 89 63
Fax: +34 91 463 55 35

E-mail: ciaiac@fomento.es
<http://www.ciaiac.es>

C/ Fruela, 6
28011 Madrid (España)

Important notice

This document constitutes the interim statement envisioned in Article 16.7 of Regulation (EU) no. 996/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as well as in paragraph 6.6 of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation. The statement includes the details of the progress of the investigation and the most important operational safety issues revealed to date. The information provided herein is subject to change as the investigation proceeds.

Pursuant to the contents of Regulation (EU) no. 96/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council and of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, the investigation is purely technical in nature and is not intended to determine or apportion blame or liability. The investigation is being conducted without necessarily resorting to evidentiary procedures and for the sole purpose of preventing future accidents.

Consequently, the use of this information for any purpose other than to prevent future accidents may result in faulty conclusions or interpretations.

Abbreviations

°	Degrees
ATC	Air Traffic Service
CFIT	Controlled Flight Into Terrain
CPL (A)	Commercial Pilot License (Aircraft)
Ft	Feet
h, hr	Hour(s)
ILS	Instrument Landing System
LEAS	Asturias Airport (Spain)
LEBZ	Badajoz Airport (Spain)
LEST	Santiago de Compostela Airport (Spain)
LH	Left Hand
LPPR	Oporto Airport (Portugal)
LVP	Low Visibility Procedures
m	Meters
METAR	Meteorology Aerodrome Weather Report
PF	Pilot Flying
PM	Pilot Monitoring
QNH	Altimeter subscale setting to obtain elevation when on the ground
RH	Right Hand
SP	Single Pilot
TWR	Control Tower
UTC	Coordinated Universal Time
VHF	Very High Frequency
VOR	VHF Omnidirectional Radio Range

DATA SUMMARY**LOCATION**

Date and time	Thursday, 2 August 2012 at 07:01¹
Site	Approach to the Santiago Airport (LEST)

AIRCRAFT

Registration	EC-IBA
Type and model	Cessna 500
Operator	Aeronaves del Noroeste (AIRNOR)

Engines

Type and model	PRATT & WHITNEY JT15D-1A
Number	2

CREW

	Pilot	First Officer
Age	35	37
License	Commercial pilot (airplane) -CPL(A)	Commercial pilot (airplane) -CPL(A)
Total flight hours ²	3,600	678
Flight hours on the type ³	500	412

INJURIES

	Fatal	Serious	Minor/None
Crew	2		
Passengers			
Third persons			

DAMAGE

Aircraft	Destroyed
Third parties	None

FLIGHT DATA

Operation	Commercial air transport-Other-Emergency medical services
Phase of flight	Approach

INTERIM STATEMENT

Date of approval	26 June 2013
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¹ All times in this report are in UTC unless otherwise specified. To obtain local time, add 2 hours to UTC time.

² Information taken from his aviation records on file at the company for which he worked.

³ Information taken from his aviation records on file at the company for which he worked.

1. HISTORY OF THE EVENT

The aircraft took off from the Santiago Airport (LEST) on 1 August at 21:46 (UTC) to transport a medical team from the Asturias Airport (LEAS) to the Porto Airport (LPPR) to provide a service for Spain's National Transplant Organization before returning to the Asturias Airport. Once in Porto, the crew waited for the medical team to complete its task, at the conclusion of which they returned to the Asturias Airport. The crew took off from this airport at 03:45 to return to the Santiago Airport. Ten minutes later, the crew established contact with approach ATC, after which it was cleared to make an ILS approach to runway 17 at the Santiago Airport. ATC relayed the last METAR⁴ to the crew. It was from 03:30 and contained the following information: runway in use 17, wind calm, visibility 4000 m with mist, few clouds at 600 ft, temperature and dew point 13° and QNH of 1019. At 04:15 the crew contacted the TWR controller, who reported calm winds and cleared them to land on runway 17. Two minutes later, the aircraft, configured for landing⁵, experienced a controlled flight into terrain (CFIT) 200 meters before the Santiago VOR, approximately 1 mile before the runway 17 threshold. The aircraft's occupants died as a result of the impact and the aircraft was destroyed.

Efforts to locate the aircraft started at 04:44. Weather conditions had worsened since the last METAR was communicated to the crew and low-visibility procedures (LVP) went into effect at 05:10, as per the manual, with the airport being returned to normal operations at 07:51.

The CIAIAC kept custody of the aircraft wreckage during the field investigation, which concluded the day after the accident. The courts, police forces and the operator were informed prior to the conclusion of the field investigation of the parts of the wreckage that the CIAIAC would release as well as of those components that would remain in the CIAIAC's custody.

2. CONDUCT OF THE INVESTIGATION

Based on the information contained in the flight plan, at the time of the accident the pilot flying (PF) was the captain, who was seated in the LH seat. The first officer, in the RH seat, was the pilot monitoring (PM). The captain had a valid and in force license and medical certificates. He had 3600 flight hours, of which 500 had been on the type. He had joined the company on 20 June of that same year. He had flown 28 hours on that aircraft though he had worked for the same company before.

⁴ Aerodrome Meteorological Report.

⁵ Approach flaps and landing gear down.

The first officer had a valid and in force license and medical certificates. He had 678 flight hours, of which 412 had been on the type. He had joined the company on 5 March of that same year. He had flown 61 hours on that aircraft. Both pilots had a Cessna 501 (Citation I/SP)⁶ rating. In addition to that day's flights (a total of four legs), the two pilots had flown together on two legs (LEST-LEBZ-LEST)⁷ a month before the accident. They had not flown together before then.

The aircraft had a valid and in force airworthiness certificate. It had 9460 hours. The last maintenance check (100-hr, 600-hr and annual inspections) had been carried out on 15 May 2012, with 9410.3 hours on the aircraft. The next check (300-hr) was scheduled for 13 December 2012. Neither the aircraft nor engine log books were found.

The investigation of the powerplant and the fuel system was able to rule out a technical fault resulting in a loss of power associated with the abnormal operation of the engines or an engine stoppage due to a lack of fuel.

Various navigation and communications units were recovered from the cockpit during the field investigation. Several of these units were inspected and checked in an effort to find information of use to the investigation.

3. CONDUCT OF THE INVESTIGATION

The investigation remains open. All of the aspects related to the entire flight sequence (Santiago-Asturias-Porto-Asturias-Santiago) are being investigated.

Crew-Operational: aspects pertaining to the crew involving both the flights made by all the crews, the medical flight in the flight sequence and the segment specific to the approach to the Santiago Airport.

Aircraft-Technical: aspects involving the condition of the aircraft and its maintenance.

Operator- Administrative: aspects involving the company's status and its air operator certificate.

Meteorological: weather aspects and their evolution on that day, as well as their influence on the various segments flown by the crew.

Airport: aspects involving the condition of the airport's radioaids and the type of operation at the airport.

⁶ Citation I/SP (Model 501): model to operate with one single pilot (SP: single-pilot).

⁷ Santiago Airport – Badajoz Airport – Santiago Airport.

ATC: aspects pertaining to the actions of control personnel in their interaction with the aircraft's crew and their handling of the emergency.

Investigators are continuing to evaluate every detail related to the factors involved in that day's flight.

A final report will be written and published at the conclusion of the investigation.

