



## National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

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|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| <b>Location:</b>               | Corfu, NY                    | <b>Accident Number:</b> | ERA21LA003 |
| <b>Date &amp; Time:</b>        | October 2, 2020, 11:45 Local | <b>Registration:</b>    | N965DM     |
| <b>Aircraft:</b>               | SOCATA TBM700                | <b>Injuries:</b>        | 2 Fatal    |
| <b>Flight Conducted Under:</b> |                              |                         |            |

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On October 2, 2020, about 1145 eastern daylight time, a Socata TBM 700, N965DM, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Corfu, New York. The private pilot and passenger were fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight.

The airplane was topped off with 173 gallons of Jet A fuel prior to the first flight of the day on October 2, 2020. The first flight departed Buffalo Niagara International Airport (BUF), Buffalo, New York, at 0747 and landed at Manchester Airport (MHT), Manchester, NH, at 0914. According to personnel at a fixed based operator (FBO) at MHT, the passenger boarded the airplane and it departed without obtaining any services there.

Preliminary radar data provided by the Federal Aviation Administration indicated the airplane departed from Runway 6 at MHT at 1019, and initiated a climbing left turn to the west. The airplane climbed to a cruise altitude of FL280 and remained at that altitude until about 1142. According to a review of air traffic control voice communication data, the pilot did not check in with the Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center during a routine handoff from one controller to another. The pilot subsequently re-established communication with a radar controller about 15 miles east of BUF, while still flying at FL280, and requested the ILS runway 23 approach into BUF. The controller instructed the pilot to descend to 8,000 ft, to expect the ILS runway 23 approach, and asked him if everything was okay, to which the pilot responded, "yes sir, everything's fine." Subsequently, the controller observed the airplane descending rapidly on radar and instructed the pilot to stop the descent at 10,000 ft. The pilot did not respond. The controller made several additional attempts to establish communications with the pilot, however, there were no further communications received from the pilot. Over the final 3 minutes of the flight, as the airplane descend from FL280, it accelerated from its previously established cruise groundspeed of 250 knots. As the airplane descended through 15,200 feet, it's radar-derived groundspeed rose to more than 340 knots, and its estimated descent rate was 13,800 feet per minute. The airplane made one right 360° turn before radar contact was lost.

According to several witnesses who heard the airplane shortly before the accident, the engine

sounded very loud before they heard the sounds of impact.

The airplane was located in a heavily wooded, swampy area. The airplane was fragmented and a postcrash fire ensued after the impact. Wreckage and components of the airplane were recovered from the surface of the terrain to a depth 15 ft below the surface. The smell of Jet A aviation fuel was noted at the accident site by first responders.

The airframe and engine components recovered from the accident site were retained for further examination.

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

|                           |        |                                |          |
|---------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|----------|
| Aircraft Make:            | SOCATA | Registration:                  | N965DM   |
| Model/Series:             | TBM700 | Aircraft Category:             | Airplane |
| Amateur Built:            | No     |                                |          |
| Operator:                 |        | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None     |
| Operator Designator Code: |        |                                |          |

### Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

|                                  |                      |                              |                   |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site:     | VMC                  | Condition of Light:          | Day               |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | KBUF, 716 ft msl     | Observation Time:            | 11:54 Local       |
| Distance from Accident Site:     | 16 Nautical Miles    | Temperature/Dew Point:       | 13°C / 8°C        |
| Lowest Cloud Condition:          | Few / 2000 ft AGL    | Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction: | 9 knots / , 250°  |
| Lowest Ceiling:                  | Broken / 6000 ft AGL | Visibility:                  | 10 miles          |
| Altimeter Setting:               | 29.97 inches Hg      | Type of Flight Plan Filed:   | IFR               |
| Departure Point:                 | Manchester, NH (MHT) | Destination:                 | Buffalo, NY (BUF) |

### Wreckage and Impact Information

|                     |         |                      |                       |
|---------------------|---------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Crew Injuries:      | 1 Fatal | Aircraft Damage:     | Destroyed             |
| Passenger Injuries: | 1 Fatal | Aircraft Fire:       | On-Ground             |
| Ground Injuries:    |         | Aircraft Explosion:  | Unknown               |
| Total Injuries:     | 2 Fatal | Latitude, Longitude: | 42.971879, -78.382376 |

## Administrative Information

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| <b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>     | Kemner, Heidi  |
| <b>Additional Participating Persons:</b> | Timothy Tressel; FAA/FSDO; Buffalo, NY<br>Philippe Santoro; Daher Aircraft; Paris<br>Les Doud; Hartzell; Piqua, OH<br>Jeremy Ganivet; Pratt & Whitney Canada; St. Hubert, OF |
| <b>Note:</b>                             | The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.   |