

The Comair5191 Accident at Lexington, Kentucky, August 27, 2006

The Controller was working three departures, all early morning commuter flights. It was a quiet and generally calm Sunday morning. The accident aircraft was the last of the three departures.

Time:	Duty performed by Controller:
	Issued SKW6819 an IFR clearance to Chicago.
	Issued EGF882 an IFR clearance to Dallas Fort Worth.
5:49:49	Issued COM5191 an IFR clearance to ATL
5:56:27	Recorded the new ATIS – Information “B.”
	Approved the pushback for SKW6819.
	Approved the pushback for EGF882
	Communicated with the Indianapolis Center for release of SKW6819 to Chicago.
	Provided taxi clearance to SKW6819 to Runway 22.
5:59:11	Approved the pushback for COM5191.
5:59:43	Provided taxi clearance to EGF882 to Runway 22.
6:00:32	Issued SKW6819 takeoff clearance from Runway 22.
6:01:40	Advised EGF882 to hold short.
6:02:03	Provided taxi clearance to COM5191 to Runway 22.
6:02:12	Issued EGF882 takeoff clearance from Runway 22.
6:02:17	Radar identified SKW6819
“	Validated the Mode-C of SKW6819.
6:02:23	Provided departure control instructions to SKW6819.
“	Initiated handoff of SKW6819 to ZID.
6:03:34	Radar identified EGF882.
“	Validated the Mode-C of EGF882.
	Approved weather deviations for SKW6819.
	Analyzed the D-BRITE radar display regarding weather deviations of SKW6819.
	Communicated with Indianapolis Center for the release of COM5191 to Atlanta.
	Coordinated with an additional Indianapolis controller regarding the weather deviations of SKW6819.
6:04:25	Provided communications transfer to Indianapolis Center of SKW6819.
6:04:32	Provided departure control instructions to EGF882.
“	Initiated handoff of EGF882 to ZID.
6:05:17	Issued COM5191 takeoff clearance from Runway 22.
6:05:25	Analyzed the D-BRITE radar display regarding EGF882 – and possible weather deviations.
“	Actively initiated a conversation with the crew of EGF882 pertaining to possible weather deviations.
	Initiated the requirement to complete the nightly traffic count.

6:05:36.. provided comm transfer to Indy Center for EGF882.
 6:06:05.. sound of increased engine RPM (begin takeoff roll)
 6:06:16.. (pilot voice, not transmitted): “dat is weird with no runway lights”
 6:06:24.. (pilot voice, not transmitted): “100kts” speed callout
 6:06:33.. sound of impact
 6:07:17.. Controller made call on Crash Phone

DISTRACTION FACTORS:

- The Controller activated the Crash Phone a full 2-minutes after takeoff clearance was issued, and nearly 50-seconds after impact. The controller was clearly distracted, but the investigation did not conclusively reveal what the true distraction was.
- The controller failed to notice when COM5191 turned onto the wrong runway. There was a 50-second window between issuing takeoff clearance and the moment COM5191 began accelerating down the runway.
- FATIGUE: this is the big aggravating factor. The controller’s vigilance was reduced at the end of an overnight shift. The ability to efficiently multitask was also diminished.
- Weather: the string of three departures was routine, but with slight additional workload due to weather. The controller worked with both SKW6819 and EGF882 for departure heading deviations around weather. This was coordinated with Center.

NON-FACTORS:

- ATIS: completed and broadcast six-minutes prior to COM5191 taxi clearance.
- SKW6819 was fully out of the picture (comm-changed) a minute prior to issuing the COM5191 takeoff clearance.
- Traffic Count: this is an insignificant task...essentially spending ten-seconds to count fourteen paper strips and mark the count onto a sheet of paper.

The list of controller duties was produced by NATCA and posted on the NATCA website. The color, times, and text notes are added to clarify the chronology. See original list at:
http://ulw.pagezone.com/ULWSiteResources/natcaweb/Resources/file/Media%20Center/Press%20Releases/2007/Comair5191_ControllerDutiesinLEX.pdf