

Learning from Tragedy

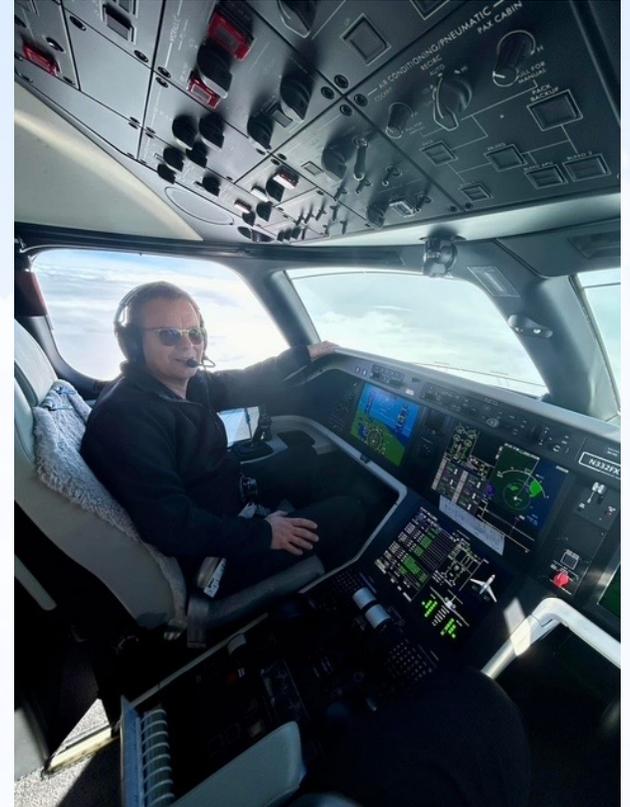
Enhancing Safety Through
Accountability and Modernization

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Praetor Captain



Introduction



About Sam

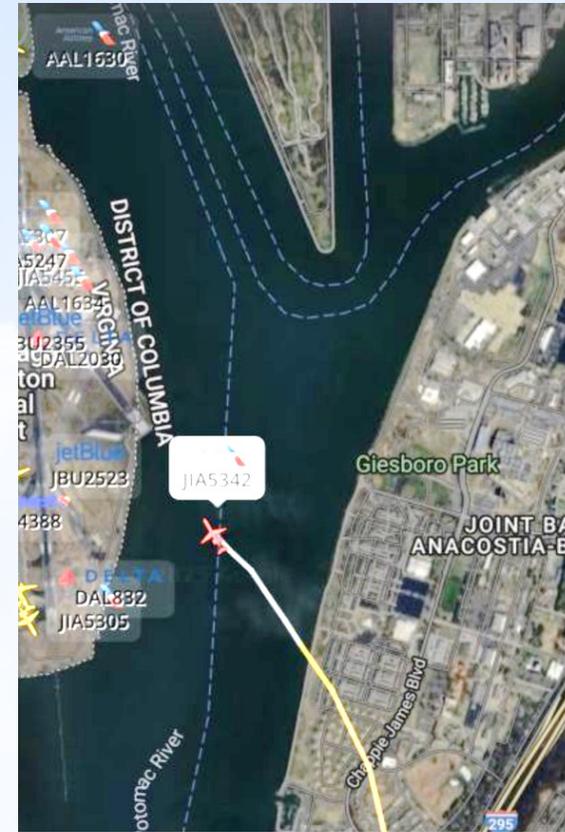
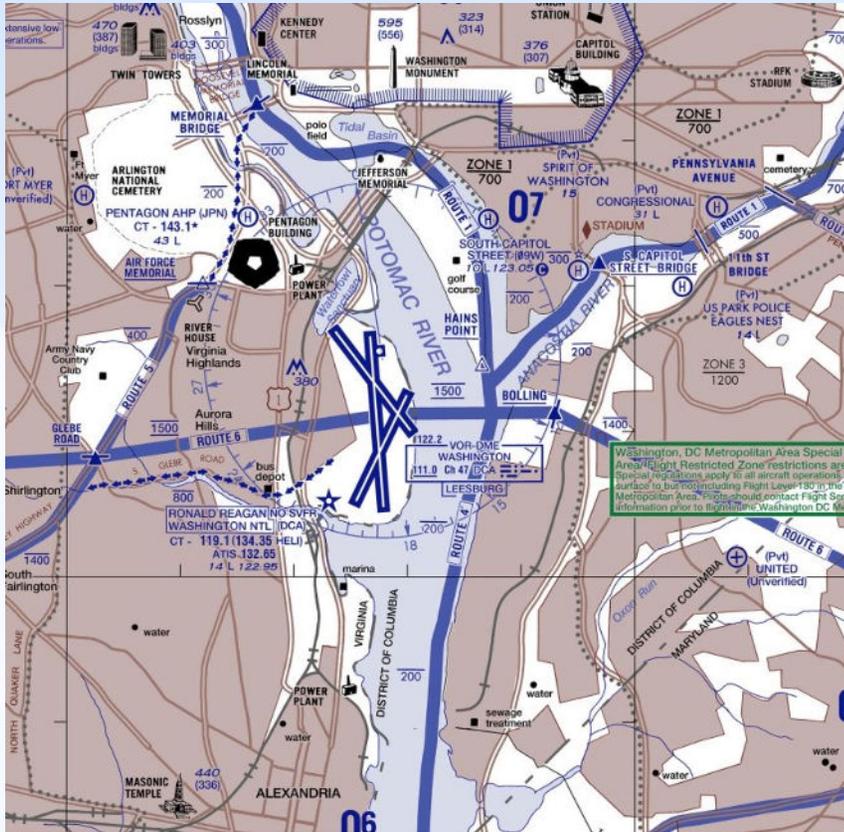


“Some people say you can’t make a living by doing something you love. But are you really living by not doing it?”

AA5342 (Blue Streak) and PAT25



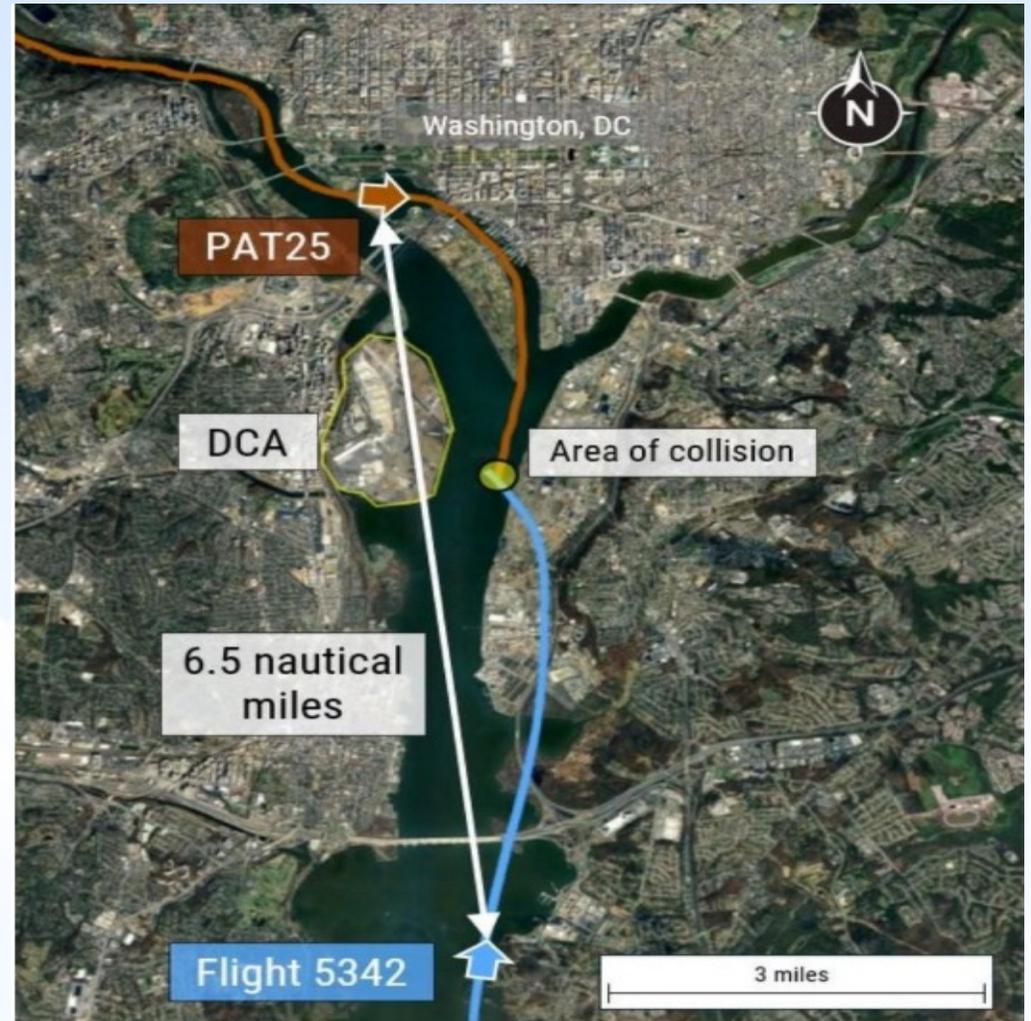
Accident Overview



Visual Separation

NVG Limitations

- Distance estimating and depth perception
- 40-degree field of view
- Bright light challenges



Visual Separation

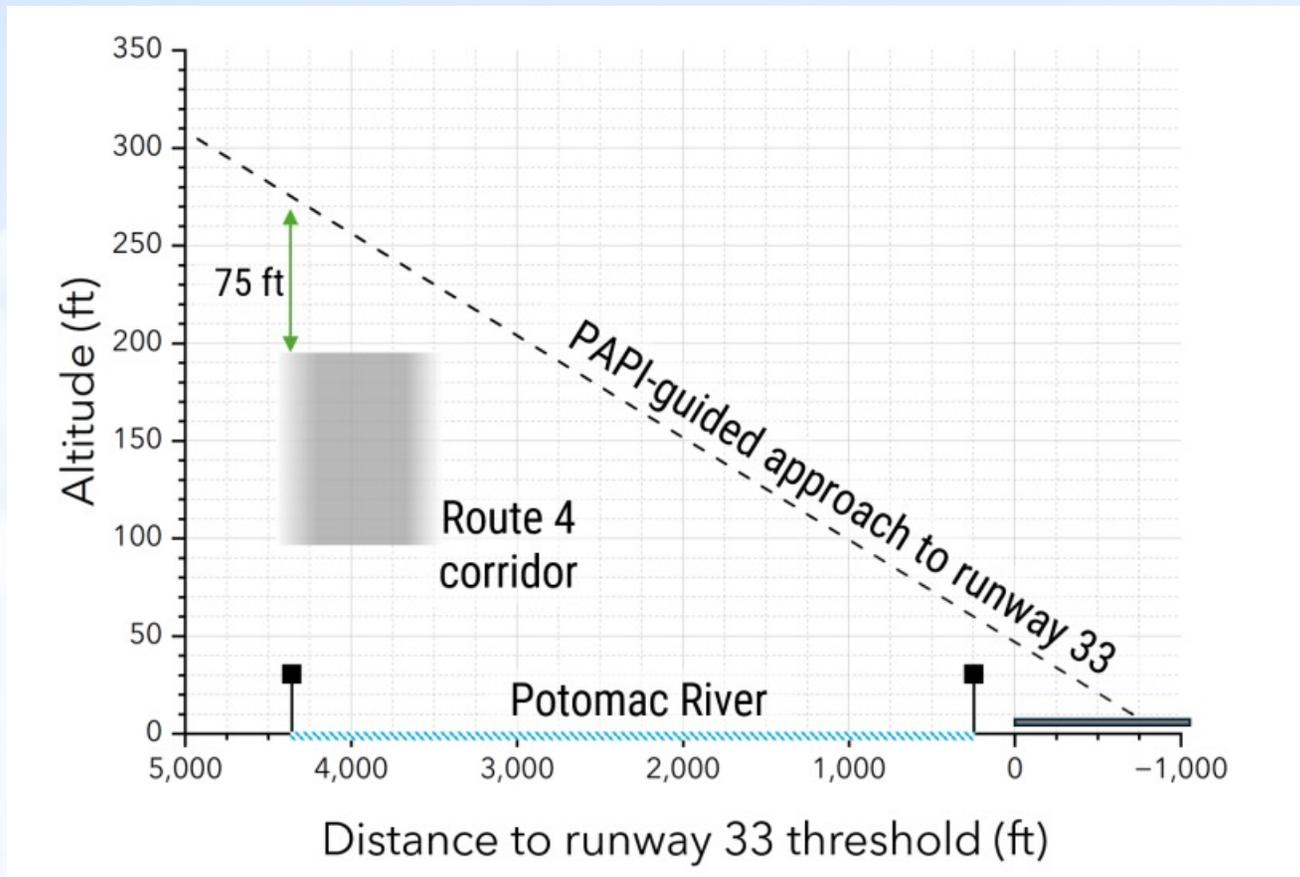
- Possible misidentification of CRJ
- Blackhawk crew made no evasive action



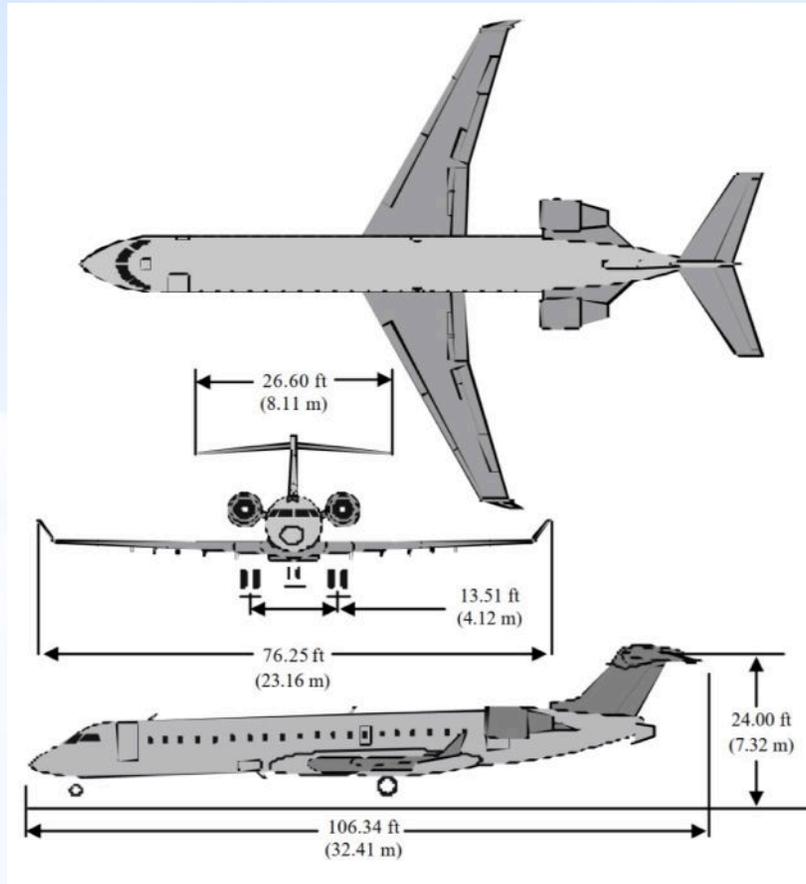
Intolerable Risk – 3 Year Look Back

- **At least one TCAS RA per month**
Half of the incidents occurred when the helicopter was above route altitude, 2/3 occurred at night.
- **15,214 occurrences with less than 1-mile lateral separation and 400 ft vertical separation**
- **85 recorded events lateral separation less than 1500ft and vertical separation less than 200ft**

Intolerable Risk – System Design



Intolerable Risk



Culture of Complacency – Risk Management

➤ Risk Analysis

Computed as low risk

➤ Risk Mitigations not taken

- **4th crewmember**
- **ADS-B out turned off/Stratus receiver not used**
- **Time of mission not considered**
- **“L” model with external stores used when slick “M” model would have been more appropriate**

Culture of Complacency – Flight Discipline

- **Requesting visual separation**
- **Not on prescribed route**
- **Above route altitude**
- **Failure to scan**
- **Communication failures**
- **IP failure to intervene**

Culture of Complacency - ATC

- **Failure to use standard phraseology**
- **Failure to maintain staffing levels**
- **Failure to deconflict**

Fixing the Issues - FAA

Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffy

- **ATC staffing**
- **Modernization**
- **Data analysis**
- **Route Updates**

Fixing the Issues – FAA

FAA Statement, April 2, 2025

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is increasing support and oversight for the air traffic controller team at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA). The FAA is also evaluating current arrival rates at DCA.

To support the well-being of controllers, a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team will visit DCA in early April, offering confidential support for staff following stressful events. The FAA will also conduct regular wellness checks at the facility.

Additional Actions:

- Increase Operational Supervisor staffing from six to eight
- Review Certified Professional Controller staffing numbers at DCA
- Review DCA's arrival rate of aircraft per hour, which is disproportionately concentrated within the last 30 minutes of each hour

Fixing the issues - Congress

- **Legislation**
- **Funding**
- **Accountability**
- **Oversight**

Fixing the issues - DOD

- **Accountability**
- **Training**
- **Retention**
- **Data Sharing and Analysis**
- **Communication**
- **Commitment to change**

Safety is not proprietary

- **Report events**
- **Share data**
- **Share lessons learned**
- **Push for positive change**
- **Have an Emergency Action Plan**



ACSE SAFETY SYMPOSIUM

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