

CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD  
Washington

June 29, 1954

TO: Messrs. Gurney, Denny, Ryan, Lee, Adams,  
The Executive Director

FROM: Director, Bureau of Safety Investigation

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident Notification: Air  
Collision, American Airlines' Flight 572,  
N 94263, and Navy SNB, No. 237773, Port  
Columbus Airport, Columbus, Ohio, June 27,  
1954, 2015 EST

American Airlines' Flight 572, Convair 240, was cleared by the Port Columbus tower to land on runway 27. When the American flight was on its final approach, the tower controller observed the Navy SNB approaching from the southeast at a low altitude and in what appeared to be close proximity to the Convair. The controller immediately requested the SNB pilot to either execute a 360-degree turn or go around the field. This request was the only radio contact with the Navy flight, which had not been given clearance to land.

Qualified witnesses placed the two aircraft at approximately 1-1/2 to 2 miles east of the airport, both in alignment with runway 27, the Convair being slightly higher than the SNB. The SNB, with gear retracted, was observed to apparently rise and collide with the under side of the Convair.

Following collision the SNB crashed and exploded in an open field approximately 1-1/2 miles east of the approach end of runway 27. American Flight 572 continued its approach and landed on runway 27. After first touchdown on the main gear, the nose gear settled on the runway and collapsed, and the aircraft slid approximately 4200 feet, coming to rest on its nose and main gear on a heading of approximately 280 degrees. Preliminary investigation indicated that the left engine and possibly the nose gear of the Convair came in contact with the SNB. The left engine was extensively damaged and almost torn out of the nacelle by impact force but remained attached to the structure.

Commander J. Hoerrath, USNR, and Lt. A. J. Edgar, occupants of the Navy SNB, received fatal injuries. Captain J. C. Pollard, First Officer J. S. Myrick, Jr., Stewardess Martha Jane Gumm, and 31 passengers of American Flight 572 evacuated the aircraft safely. The only injuries were to the stewardess and approximately 15 of the passengers who experienced burns on their hands from sliding down the escape rope. Captain Pollard and First Officer Myrick evacuated via the cockpit windows; all other occupants used the emergency escape rope. The canvas evacuation slide was not used because of the passengers' eagerness to evacuate the aircraft. Fire from an electrical short in the belly compartment of the Convair was quickly extinguished.

The weather at Columbus, Ohio, was as follows:

1930 EST - Scattered clouds at 20,000 feet; scattered clouds at 30,000 feet; visibility 15; temperature 77; dewpoint 45; wind NW 18; altimeter 29.99.

2030 EST - Scattered clouds at 30,000; visibility 12; temperature 70; dewpoint 48; wind N 6; altimeter 30.02.

Official sunset was at 2005 EST, end of civil twilight 2038 EST, and total darkness occurred at 2119 EST.

Investigator-in-Charge R. P. Parshall of the Kansas City office, Investigators C. E. Stillwagon and H. W. Hedlund of the Chicago office, and Structures Specialist M. V. Clarke of the Washington office are at the scene.

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