



**PRELIMINARY REPORT**

**AIC 24-1003**



**North Coast Aviation Limited**

**P2-SAM**

**Britian Norman Islander**

**BN-2B-26**

**Aircraft Impact with Terrain**

**32 nm North-east of Nadzab Airport, Morobe Province**

**Papua New Guinea**

**22 December 2024**

## ABOUT THE AIC

The Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) is an independent statutory agency within Papua New Guinea (PNG). The AIC is governed by a Commission and is entirely separate from the judiciary, transport regulators, policy makers and service providers. The AIC's function is to improve safety and public confidence in the aviation mode of transport through excellence in: independent investigation of aviation accidents and other safety occurrences within the aviation system; safety data recording and analysis; and, fostering safety awareness, knowledge and action.

The AIC is responsible for investigating accidents and other transport safety matters involving civil aviation, in PNG, as well as participating in overseas investigations involving PNG registered aircraft. A primary concern is the safety of commercial transport, with particular regard to fare-paying passenger operations.

The AIC performs its functions in accordance with the provisions of the PNG *Civil Aviation Act 2000 (as Amended)*, and the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1951* and *Annex 13* to the *Convention on International Civil Aviation*.

The object of a safety investigation is to identify and reduce safety-related risk. AIC investigations determine and communicate the safety factors related to the transport safety matter being investigated.

At 12:14 (02:14 UTC) on 22 December 2024, the NiuSky Pacific Limited (NSPL) notified AIC via phone of an unreported position report at a designated location of a BN-2B-26 aircraft, registered P2-SAM, owned and operated by North Coast Aviation Limited. At 1:53, NSPL notified the AIC of the unreported arrival of P2-SAM at Nadzab Airport by sending the AIC an Initial Notification of Incidents (INI) report. AIC immediately commenced an investigation.

This *Preliminary Aircraft Accident Investigation Report* was produced by the AIC, and contains facts known to the AIC before the official release date. It is released by the Commission in accordance with *Paragraph 7.1 of ICAO Annex 13*. The report is also publicly available on the AIC website <https://www.aic.gov.pg>.

The report is based on the initial investigation carried out by the AIC in accordance with PNG *Civil Aviation Act 2000*, *Chapter 31* of the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1951*, *Annex 13* to the *Convention on International Civil Aviation*, and the *PNG AIC Investigation Policy and Procedures Manual*. It contains factual information. Analysis of that information, findings and contributing (causal) factors, other factors, safety actions, and safety recommendations are reserved for the *Final Report*.

The sole objective of the investigation and the Preliminary Report is the AIC's obligation to the *Convention on International Civil Aviation* and in accordance with *ICAO Annex 13*, and thereby promote aviation safety. (Reference: *ICAO Annex 13, Chapter 7*). Readers are advised that in accordance with *Section 219* of the *Civil Aviation Act 2000 (as amended)* and *Annex 13*, it is not the purpose of the Commission's aircraft accident investigation to apportion blame or liability. Fact based statements in the report should not be interpreted as apportioning blame.

Consequently, AIC reports are confined to matters of safety significance and should not be used for any other purpose.



**Maryanne J. Wal**  
Chief Commissioner

17 January 2025



# Norman Islander BN2B-26 Aeroplane Controlled Flight Into Terrain

## Occurrence Details

On 22 December 2024, at 10:28<sup>1</sup> local time (00:18 UTC<sup>2</sup>), a Britten Norman BN-2B-26 Islander aircraft, registered P2-SAM, owned and operated by North Coast Aviation Limited, on a VFR<sup>3</sup> single pilot charter flight from Wasu to Nadzab, Morobe Province, collided with terrain 32 NM<sup>4</sup> from Nadzab (see Figure 1). All persons on board were fatally injured upon impact. The aircraft was destroyed from the collision and post-impact fire.

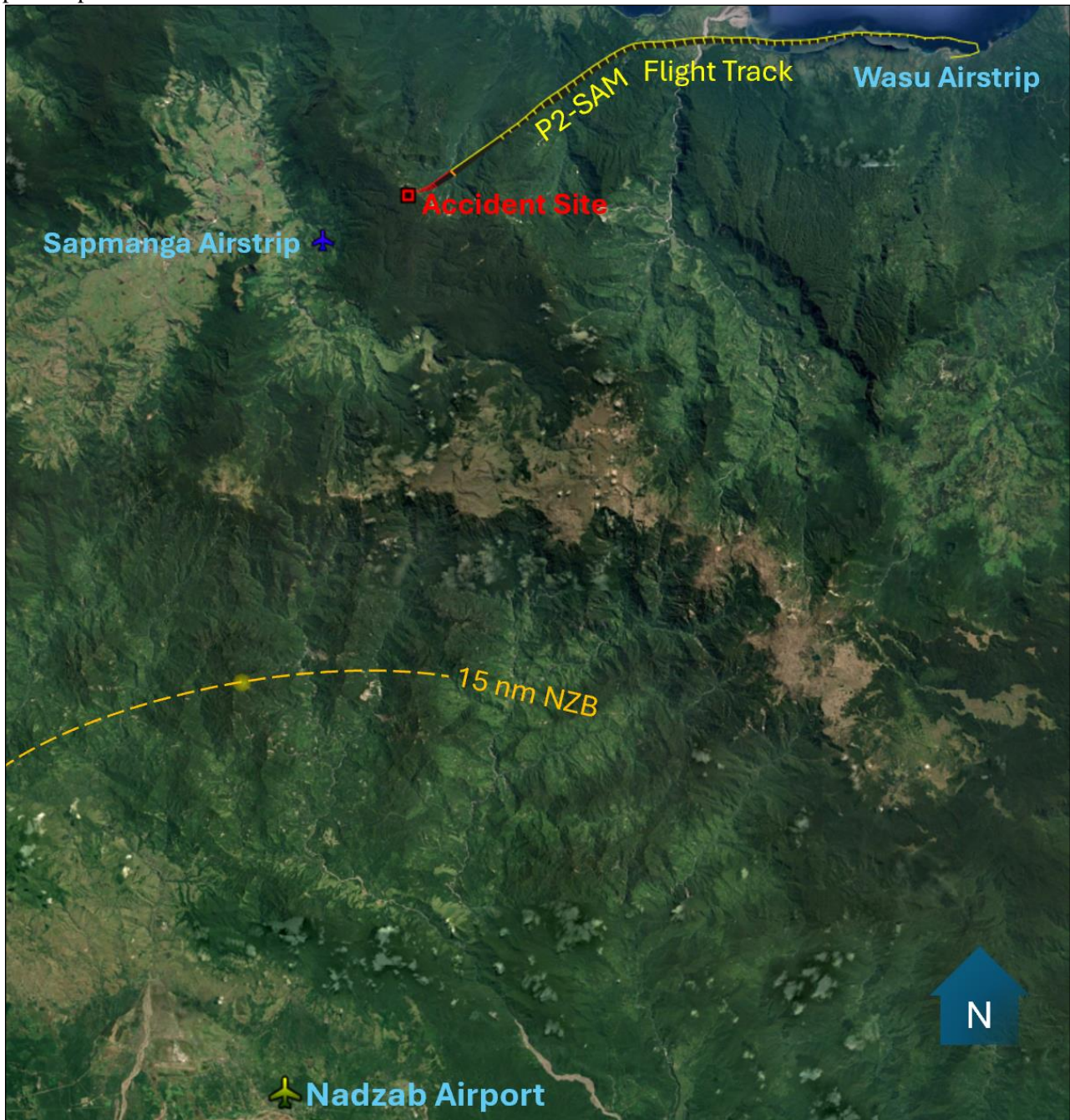


Figure 1: P2-SAM Accident recorded flight track from departure to accident. (Source: V2 Track recorded data<sup>5</sup>)

<sup>1</sup> Estimated time of the accident based on recorded pre-accident flight path and performance data.

<sup>2</sup> The 24-hour clock, in Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), is used in this report to describe the local time as specific events occurred. Local time in the area of the accident, Papua New Guinea Time (Pacific/Port Moresby Time) is UTC + 10 hours.

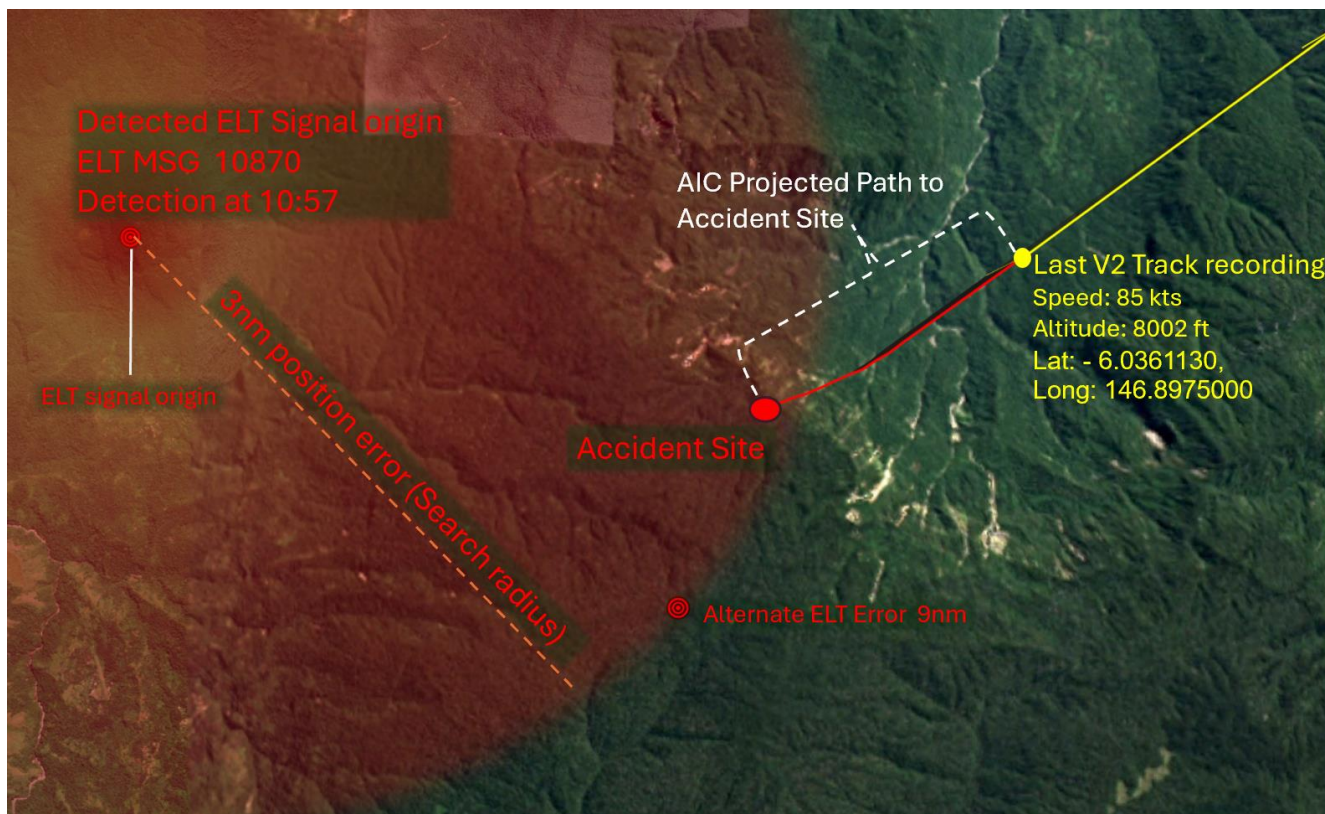
<sup>3</sup> Visual Flight Rules.

<sup>4</sup> Nautical miles.

<sup>5</sup> Spidertracks: An innovative satellite-based tracking system, combining satellite communication and GPS technology into one simple, cost effective and portable solution.



Earlier that morning, P2-SAM flew from Nadzab to Wasu. After the completion of activities at Wasu, the passengers boarded to return to Nadzab. The aircraft departed at 10:12, and the pilot called Port Moresby Flight Information Services (FIS), informing FIS of their departure and that they were tracking to intercept a 170 track to Nadzab not above 10,000 ft AMSL<sup>6</sup>, with an estimated arrival time of 10:47. Records confirmed that there were five persons on board; the pilot and four passengers. The pilot occupied the left seat in the cockpit and all passengers were in the passenger cabin. Following the radio call to FIS, the pilot was subsequently instructed by FIS to call Nadzab Approach when approaching 15 nm to Nadzab.



According to the Operator’s V2-Tracking System, at about 10:21, the aircraft took a left heading from the coast and began tracking Southwest while continuing the climb through 5,500 ft<sup>7</sup>. This track was maintained until the last recorded position at 10:26:59. The last recorded point showed that the aircraft was 5.7 NM Northeast of Sapmanga, at 85 kts<sup>8</sup>, and at an altitude of 8,002 ft. The wreckage position coordinates showed that the last recorded flight position was about 1.8 NM Northeast of the accident site.

At 10:44, Nadzab Approach Controller initiated communication checks to establish contact with P2-SAM but did not receive a response. Nadzab Approach subsequently advised Flight Information Service (FIS) of non-contact with P2-SAM.

At 10:30, the Aviation Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) received a COSPAS SARSAT<sup>9</sup> signal. A Distress Phase was declared at 10:47.

At 11:30, the distress message, including the estimated coordinates of the ELT signal, was sent by ATC to the search helicopter, owned and operated by Manalos Aviation. The Search Helicopter was dispatched to the Sapmanga Area for the search and recovery (SAR) of the aircraft (P2-SAM) and the persons onboard. However, due to cloud cover in the area, the helicopter had to return to Lae and the SAR operation was called off at 14:40.

SAR operations resumed on 23 December 2024. The helicopter pilot spotted the wreckage about 32 NM Northeast of Nadzab, on the ranges East of the Sapmanga Valley at about 07:30. However, the SAR team could not access the crash site due to weather.

SAR operations continued on 24 December 2024 and a doctor that was engaged with the SAR operation, accessed the crash site and confirmed that there were no survivors from the accident. Recovery efforts continued with a

<sup>6</sup> Above Mean Sea Level

<sup>7</sup> Feet

<sup>8</sup> Knots

<sup>9</sup> A satellite system designed to detect and locate activated distress beacons transmitting in the frequency band of 406.0-406.1 MH. Source: ICAO/IMO IAMSAR MANUAL.

team tracking to the crash site from Sapmanga while another team was winched into the crash site by helicopter. All deceased victims of the aircraft accident were recovered and transported to Lae on 31 December 2024.

Following onsite investigation, it was established by observing impact damage that the aircraft had flown into the forest canopy at about 8,000 ft, clipping a tree with its right wing before impacting the ground. The collision damage indicates that the aircraft was at speeds that would normally be associated with engine-powered speeds. A spark from the impact ignited the fuel on board causing a fire which severely burned and destroyed the aircraft.

### **AIC comment**

The investigation is continuing and will include all circumstances surrounding the accident including, but not limited to, the flight operations, maintenance, weather, human factors and post-accident survival aspects.

**The investigation analysis and findings will be established and included in the *Final Report*.**

### **Safety Action**

At the time of the publication of this *Preliminary Report*, no safety action has been reported.

### **Recommendations**

At the time of the publication of this *Preliminary Report*, no recommendations have been issued by the AIC.

## General Details

Date and time:	22 December 2024 – estimated 10:28 local time (00:28 UTC)	
Occurrence category:	Accident	
Primary occurrence type:	Controlled Flight Into Terrain	
Location:	5.7 nm ENE of Sapmanga, Kabwum District, Morobe Province Papua New Guinea	
	Latitude: 06° 03' 00" S	Longitude: 146° 52' 37" E

## Crew details

Nationality	Papua New Guinean
Age	55
Gender	Male
Licence type	Commercial Pilot License- Aeroplane (CPL-A)
Total hours	TBA
Total hours on type	TBA

## Aircraft Details

Aircraft manufacturer and model: Britten Norman Island BN-2B-26		
Registration:	P2-SAM	
Serial number:	7504	
Total Time Since New (hours)	19,141.90	
Type of operation	Charter	
Persons on board:	Crew: 1	Passengers: 4
Injuries:		
Minor	0	0
Serious	0	0
Fatal	1	4
Damage	Aircraft destroyed	

## Engine Data

Manufacturer	Lycoming
Model	O-540
<b>Engine number one (Left)</b>	
Serial Number:	L-20128-40A
Time Since Overhaul (hours)	2171.01
<b>Engine number two (Right)</b>	
Serial Number:	RL-24078-40E
Time Since Overhaul (hours)	1399.60