



N351BL Preliminary Occurrence Report

Release Date 26th August 2024

Location Near the Leonard Thompson Int'l Airport (MYAM), Marsh Harbour, Abaco, Bahamas	Occurrence Number OCC-2024/0037
Occurrence Date 4 th August 2024 12:05 pm (1605 UTC)	Registration N351BL
Aircraft Make/Model BRM Aero SRO Bristell S-LSA	Serial Number 033/2013
Flight Conducted Under Visual Flight Rules	Occurrence Category Undetermined

Information:

Narrative:

At approximately 9:19 am local (1319 UTC) on the 4th of August 2024, a BRM Aero SRO Bristell S-LSA aircraft with United States registration N351BL, departed from the Sebastian Municipal Airport (X26), Sebastian, Florida, USA enroute to the Leonard Thompson International Airport (MYAM), Marsh Harbour, Abaco, Bahamas with the pilot of the aircraft as the sole person on board.

Prior to his departure that morning, the pilot in command was documented to have purchased 22 gallons of 100 LL AVGAS fuel.

The accident flight was a continuation of a planned trip that began one day prior on the 3rd of August 2024 with a departure from the Clark Regional Airport (KJVY), Jeffersonville, Indiana, USA at approximately 10:15 am, with a stop in Georgia, USA that afternoon before continuing on to the Sebastian, Florida, where he overnighted.

According to flight data received from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the accident flight route was a general East Southeast (ESE) direction as it transitioned from the US into the Bahamas.

N351BL Preliminary Occurrence Report

Release Date 26th August 2024

The aircraft never landed at MYAM which prompted initiation of search and rescue efforts that afternoon with coordination between the Royal Bahamas Police Force (RBPF), the United States Coast Guard (USCG) and the Royal Bahamas Defense Force (RBDF).

Air traffic control flight data provided by the FAA indicated that their last radar position of the aircraft was received at approximately 10:47 am at coordinates 27°11'58"N 79°7'49"W at a distance of approximately 42 nautical miles Northwest (NW) of the Grand Bahama Int'l Airport (MYGF), Grand Bahama, Bahamas.

The US Coast Guard provided an updated aircraft position after receiving a “ping” of the aircraft at coordinates 26°40'20"N 77°24'34"W approximately 20 nautical miles West Northwest (WNW) of MYAM. Searches conducted that evening proved unsuccessful as there were negative sightings.

Checks were also made at several airports in the Bahamas including at the Grand Bahama Int'l Airport (MYGF), West End Airport (MYGW), Grand Bahama; Treasure Cay Airport (MYAT), Abaco; Walker's Cay Airport (MYAW), Abaco; and Leonard Thompson Int'l Airport (MYAM), Abaco. All checks indicated negative sighting of the aircraft.

On the 5th of August 2024, search and rescue efforts continued and yielded negative results. Up to the 7th of August 2024, there had been no sighting of the pilot, nor the aircraft.



Fig.1: Aircraft route of flight prior to approach into MYAM

N351BL Preliminary Occurrence Report

Release Date 26th August 2024

On the 8th of August 2024, shortly after noon, the AAIA was notified that the presumed wreckage of N351BL was located by pilots assisting in search efforts. It was later confirmed to be the aircraft, which was found in an area of marsh land at coordinates 26°30'34.00"N 77° 6'26.00"W at a distance of approximately 0.6 nautical miles or approximately 4,000 feet west of the approach end of runway 09 at MYAM.



Fig.2: Wreckage of N351BL

The pilot was found deceased.

A team of accident investigators were dispatched to Marsh Harbour, Abaco, Bahamas on Friday 9th August 2024 to document the crash site and collect evidence.

Information gathered during the investigation revealed that pilots flying from the United States into Marsh Harbour, Abaco who landed prior to 12:15 pm that day, indicated that the weather in and around the vicinity of MYAM at that time was Visual Meteorological Conditions¹ (VMC) with good visibility, however, they observed windy conditions, with gusts estimated to be in excess of 25 knots.

¹ Visual Meteorological Conditions (VMC) - are weather conditions under which pilots have sufficient visibility to fly aircraft relying on visual references. VMC is defined by specific criteria regarding visibility, cloud distance, and ceiling, which must meet or exceed established minimums.



N351BL Preliminary Occurrence Report

Release Date 26th August 2024

Additionally, two pilots that were flying in the vicinity of MYAM up to 12:15 pm that day, reported hearing over the Unicom² frequency, an unidentified aircraft broadcast intention to land on runway 09 at MYAM while at a position of approximately 6 nautical miles (NM) from the field. According to both pilots, there were no other broadcasts made by that unidentified aircraft.

The two pilots also reported observing an unidentified target on their Automatic Dependent Surveillance - Broadcast (ADS-B³) equipment around that same period operating within the vicinity of MYAM.

On the 16th of August 2024, the aircraft wreckage was retrieved from the crash site for further analysis and examination to be conducted in coordination with the manufacturers of the aircraft airframe and engine.

This is preliminary information, subject to change, and may contain errors. Any errors in this report will be corrected when the final report has been completed.

Aircraft and Owner / Operator Information:

Aircraft Manufacturer

BRM Aero SRO

Registration

N351BL

Model / Series

Bristell S-LSA

Aircraft

Classification

Light Sport

Amateur Built

Operator

Air Carrier

Operating

Certificate

Not applicable

² UNICOM - stands for Universal Communications. It is defined as a non-government base station that offers ground to air and air to ground communication. A typical UNICOM station uses a single communication frequency and offers airport information at public-use airports.

³ Automatic Dependent Surveillance -Broadcast (ADS-B) - A means by which aircraft, aerodrome vehicles and other objects can automatically transmit and/or receive data such as identification, position and additional data, as appropriate, in a broadcast mode via a data link



N351BL Preliminary Occurrence Report

Release Date 26th August 2024

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan:

Conditions at Accident site

Visual Meteorological
Conditions

Condition of Light

Day

Observation Facility

Grand Bahama Int'l Airport
(MYGF), Grand Bahama,
Bahamas

Observation Time

1600 UTC

Distance from Site

86 NM

Temp /Dewpoint

32°C/26 °C

Lowest Cloud Condition

BKN015CB

Wind Direction / Speed

140/18KTS

Lowest Ceiling**Visibility**

>6 statute miles

Altimeter Setting

30.01 in. Hg

Type of flight Plan

Filed

Visual Flight Rules

Departure Point

Sebastian Municipal Airport
(X26), Sebastian, FL, USA

Destination

Leonard Thompson Int'l
Airport (MYAM),
Marsh Harbour, Abaco,
Bahamas



N351BL Preliminary Occurrence Report

Release Date 26th August 2024

Wreckage and Impact Information:

Crew Injuries	Aircraft Damage
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1 Fatal

Destroyed

Passenger Injuries	Aircraft Fire
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0

Not Applicable

Ground Injuries	Aircraft Explosion
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0

Not Applicable

Total Injuries	Latitude, Longitude
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1 Fatal

26°30'34.00"N 77° 6'26.00"W

The aircraft was observed to have sustained heavy impact damage.

The forward section of the aircraft was embedded into the marsh. Both wings were attached to the aircraft with the leading and trailing edges sustaining substantial damage. The right wing flap appeared to be in an extended position. Upon inspection of cockpit instrumentation, it was observed that the flap indicator was positioned to 30° (full extension).

The aircraft was oriented facing a heading of approximately 86°. The debris field extended along a path consistent with an easterly heading in alignment with runway 09 at MYAM, with pieces of debris scattered on both sides of the 86° orientation of the aircraft.

The debris field, measured from the crumpled fuselage, extended forward for a distance of approximately 72 feet to the furthest piece of debris (section of cowling).

Upon exposure of the powerplant during recovery, it was noted that the tips of all three propeller blades had been broken.

N351BL Preliminary Occurrence Report

Release Date 26th August 2024



Fig.3: N351BL Crash site in relation to runway 09 at MYAM

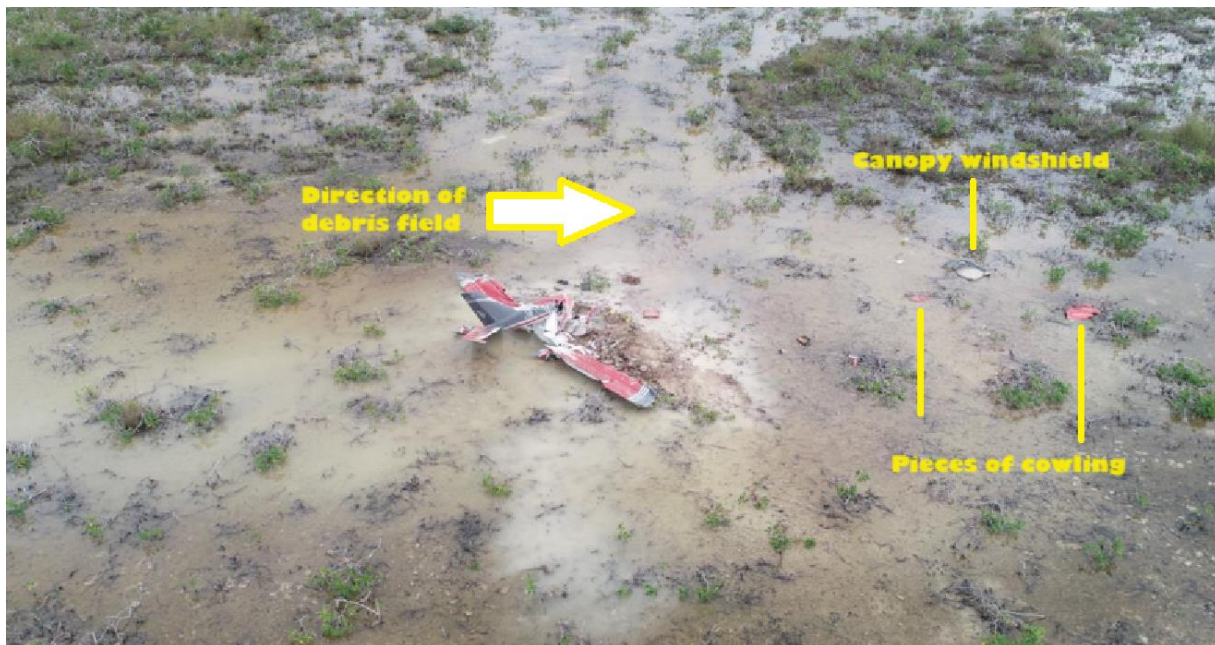


Fig.4: Drone view of debris field at crash site



N351BL Preliminary Occurrence Report

Release Date 26th August 2024

Administrative Information:

Investigator in Charge

Mr. Kendall Dorsett Jr.

Additional Information

Accredited Representatives

Ms. Leah Read – National Transportation Safety Board (USA)	Mr. Stanislav Suchy - Air Accidents Investigation Institute of the Czech Republic
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Mr. Bernhard Kobylik – Civil
Aviation Safety Investigation
Authority (Austria)

Publishing information

Aircraft Accident Investigation Authority
Lynden Pindling International Airport
Domestic Terminal
Unit A1.120
P. O. Box CB-11702
Nassau N. P., Bahamas
Tel: 1 (242) 376-1617 or (242) 376-8334
Fax: (242) 377-0272
Email: baaid@bahamas.gov.bs
Website: <http://www.baaid.org>

About the AAIA

The Aircraft Accident Investigation Authority (AAIA) is the independent accident investigation agency under the Bahamas' Ministry of Energy & Transport (MOET) charged with the responsibility of investigating all aviation accidents and serious incidents in the Bahamas.

The AAIA does not investigate for the purpose of apportioning blame or to provide a means for determining liability.

The AAIA performs its functions in accordance with the provisions of the Aircraft Accident Investigation Authority Act 2019 and Regulations 2021, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Annex 13 and, where applicable, relevant international agreements.