SP-20

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Log 1528

ISSUED:

Forwarded to:
Honorable J. Lynn Helms
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue S. W.
Washington, D.C. 20594

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

A-82-112 through -115

About 1026, on February 6, 1980, a Cessna TU-206G, N7393N, and a United States Air Force tactical aircraft, a General Dynamics F-111D, collided in midair about 11 nmi northeast of Cannon Air Force Base. The Cessna had departed Alemeda Airport, Albuquerque, New Mexico, had made an en route stop at Tucumcari, New Mexico, and was destined for Clovis, New Mexico. On the morning of February 6, the General Dynamics F-111D had departed Cannon Air Force Base, located about 13 miles southwest of the Clovis Municipal Airport, on a cross country training flight. The F-111D was returning to Cannon Air Force Base (AFB) to complete the mission. The two aircraft collided near 5,800 feet m.s.l. The pilot and passenger aboard the Cessna and both crewmembers of the F-111D were killed. The weather was clear and the visibility was reported as 30 miles. 1/

Neither pilot had reported any mechanical problem or system malfunction with his aircraft which might have caused a distraction to disrupt his scanning for other aircraft. There was no evidence that the Cessna pilot had communication difficulties since shortly before the collision he had made a radio call to the Tucumcari (TCC) flight service station. Although he was not required to, the Cessna pilot had the capability to transmit to the radar approach control center (RAPCON) controllers and make his position and intentions known. The controllers stated, however, that the Cessna pilot was never in radio contact with them. The Safety Board believes that had the Cessna pilot been in radio contact with the RAPCON facility, timely traffic advisories or radar vectoring might have prevented the collision.

A State of New Mexico Aeronautical Chart was found in the Cessna wreckage. This chart displayed the Cannon AFB control zone and the airspace controlled by the Cannon Air Traffic (AT) facilities. The features of this chart are illustrated in a manner similar to the U.S. Albuquerque (ABQ) Sectional Aeronautical Chart. Neither contained notations to caution pilots of heavy concentrations of low-altitude jet traffic in the Clovis area, to advise that Cannon AFB provided Stage II radar service, or to advise pilots to consult the publication "Graphic Notices and Supplemental Data" when flight is planned in the Clovis area.

1/ For additional information, read Aircraft Accident Report—"Midair Collision, United States Air Force, F-111D; Building Contractors, Inc., Cessna TU-206G, Clovis, New Mexico, February 6, 1980" (NTSB-AAR-82-10).

Charts similar to the Federal Sectional Aeronautical Chart and the State of New Mexico Aeronautical Chart are the charts most commonly carried by pilots on cross country flights. Other publications carry notices of AT advisory services, terminal area instrument flight rules (IFR) routes versus visual flight rules (VFR) recommended corridors, and advisories of cautionary areas and altitudes, but are not normally carried aboard aircraft by private pilots, particularly noninstrument rated pilots. Even though a private pilot is aware of a terminal cautionary area, without an advisory note on his Aeronautical Chart suggesting that he contact the controlling AT facility for traffic advisories and recommended routes, he must rely on his memory for safe piloting in the recommended airspace. Although the pilot of the Cessna had flown in the Clovis area several times, there was no evidence that he was aware of recommended flight routes in the Cannon AFB terminal area. The Safety Board believes that had there been an advisory notation on the aeronautical chart, the Cessna pilot might have been prompted to establish radio contact with the Cannon RAPCON.

The terminal area graphic notice for Clovis-Cannon AFB, New Mexico, dated February 22, 1979, was published in the January 1980, issue of "Graphic Notices and Supplemental Data," a FAA Flight Information publication. The same graphic notice was distributed by the Cannon Mid-Air Collision Avoidance (MACA) program to other airport operators, military and civilian, including fixed base operators at Clovis Municipal Airport. Distribution had also been made to Cannon AFB personnel and the notice had been available to the pilot of the F-111D and the RAPCON controllers. It is not known if the terminal area graphic notice had been seen by the pilot of the Cessna. The Safety Board believes that it is a rule of prudent airmanship that all pilots acquaint themselves with en route and airport information along their intended flight path.

The geometric outline in the northeast sector of the 15-nmi cautionary area of the chart, which relates to a VFR corridor but cannot be readily identified as a VFR corridor, does not appear in the legend although there is an unrelated symbol described in the legend as "Recommended VFR corridors". A numerical symbol which appears outside the cautionary area is intended to indicate that the maximum altitude to be flown in that area is 5,300 feet. This symbol, which is used on instrument approach charts, is not described in the legend of the subject graphic notice. The meaning of the geometric outline and the numerical symbols might not be known to a noninstrument rated pilot.

Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Federal Aviation Administration:

> Simplify and standardize, to the extent feasible, the terminal area graphic notices, published in the "Graphic Notices and Supplemental Data," and explain all symbols used in a notice in the accompanying legend. (Class II, Priority Action) (A-82-112)
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> Add to all terminal area charts, which are published in "Graphic Notices and Supplemental Data," a notation encouraging all pilots intending to operate VFR within the terminal area to contact the controlling AT facility and an advisory notation, when applicable, indicating that radar traffic advisory services are available on request. (Class II, Priority Action) (A-82-113)
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> Add to all federal sectional aeronautical charts a prominent advisory notation pertinent to terminal areas at which radar traffic advisory services are available on request. (Class II, Priority Action) (A-82-114)

Advise state aviation authorities that they should include on state aeronautical charts the information contained on federal sectional aeronautical charts pertinent to safe navigation, particularly in regard to radar traffic advisory services in terminal areas where there are multiple airfields. (Class II, Priority Action) (A-82-115)

BURNETT, Chairman, McADAMS, BURSLEY, and ENGEN, Members, concurred in these recommendations. GOLDMAN, Vice Chairman, did not participate.

Patricia A. Goldman for

By: Jim Burnett
Chairman