

**NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
Office of Aviation Safety
Washington D.C. 20594**

Meteorological Factual Report
DCA07MM015

A. ACCIDENT

Location: Point Couverden, Icy Strait, Alaska
Date: May 14, 2007
Time: 0154 Alaska Daylight Time (ADT)
Vessel: MV Empress of the North, United States Flag Cruise Ship

B. WEATHER GROUP

A Weather Group was not established.

C. SUMMARY

On May 14, 2007 at 0154 ADT the MV Empress of the North a 360 feet United States Flag cruise ship grounded in Icy Strait, Alaska (latitude 58 degrees 12 minutes north and longitude 135 degrees 4 minutes west). Passengers were evacuated from the vessel and there were no injuries reported.

D. DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION

Note: All times are stated as Alaska Daylight Time (ADT) based on the 24-hour clock unless otherwise noted. All heights above mean sea level (MSL) unless otherwise noted. All directions are referenced to true north unless otherwise noted. ADT = Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) – 8 hours. UTC = Z.

McIDAS – Man-computer Interactive Data Access System. McIDAS is an interactive meteorological analysis and data management computer system. McIDAS is administered by personnel at the Space Science and Engineering Center at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Data are accessed and reviewed on a Windows XP Pro Workstation running McIDAS-X software.

Surface Weather Observations

Hoonah Seaplane Base, Hoonah, Alaska (PAOH)

PAOH is located about 12 nautical miles west of the accident site.

0056 ADT ... Overcast skies; visibility 10 miles; light rain; temperature 43 degrees F; dew point 39 degrees F; relative humidity 86%; winds 080 degrees at 10 miles per hour.

0156 ADT ... Overcast skies; visibility 7 miles; temperature 43 degrees F; dew point 40 degrees F; relative humidity 89%; winds 070 degrees at 8 miles per hour.

Data from: www.ncdc.noaa.gov

Weather Radar Data

Sitka, Alaska (PACG), Level III weather radar data were reviewed and displayed using the NCDC Java Nexrad Viewer (see www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/radar/jnx/). The Level III data were obtained from the National Climatic Data Center.

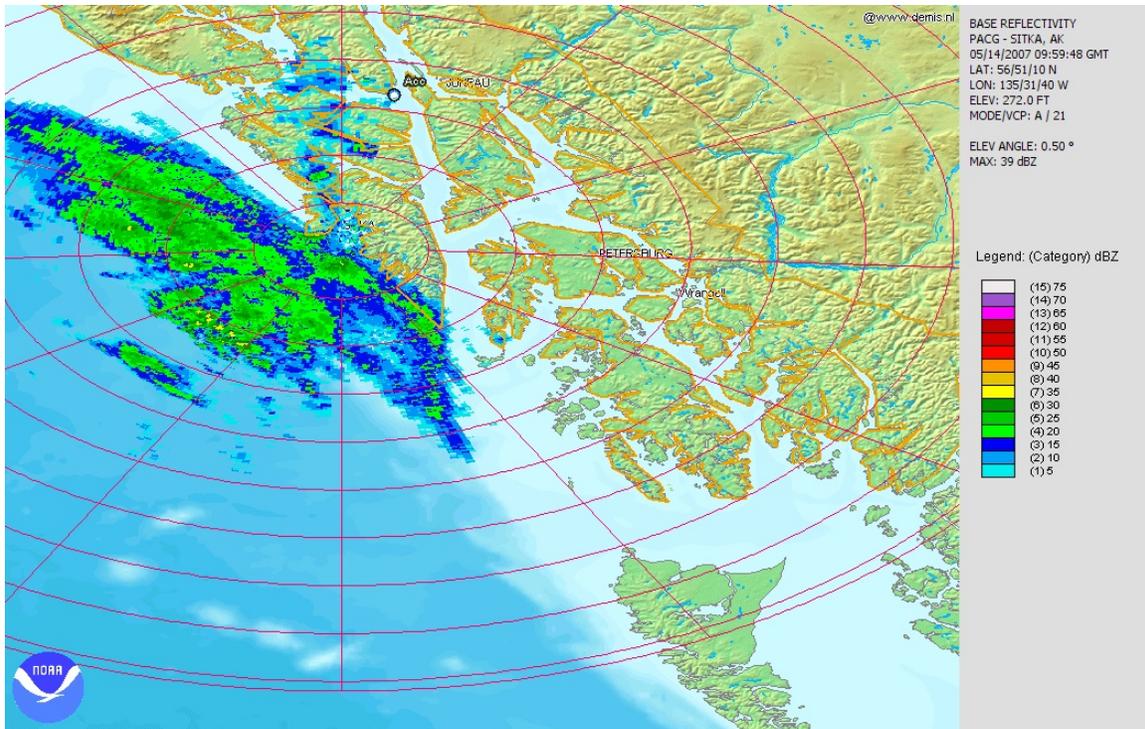
<http://hurricane.ncdc.noaa.gov/pls/plhas/has.dsselect>



PACG Base Reflectivity Image for 0148:16 ADT (0948:16Z). The accident site is noted by 'Acc.' Weather radar echo intensities are in dBZ (see the color bar at the right side of the image). Weak weather radar echoes are seen in the accident area. Range rings are every 25 nautical miles.



PACG Base Reflectivity Image for 0154:02 ADT (0954:02Z). The accident site is noted by 'Acc.' Weather radar echo intensities are in dBZ (see the color bar at the right side of the image). Weak weather radar echoes are seen in the accident area. Range rings are every 25 nautical miles.



PACG Base Reflectivity Image for 0159:48 ADT (0959:48Z). The accident site is noted by 'Acc.' Weather radar echo intensities are in dBZ (see the color bar at the right side of the image). Weak weather radar echoes are seen in the accident area. Range rings are every 25 nautical miles.

Coastal Waters Forecast

Issued by the Juneau, Alaska, National Weather Service Office
Sunday May 13, 2007 at 1600 ADT

Icy Strait

Tonight ... East wind 20 knots; seas 4 feet; rain.
Monday ... Northeast wind 20 knots; seas 3 feet; rain.
Monday Night ... Southeast wind 20 knots; seas 4 feet.

Issued by the Juneau, Alaska, National Weather Service Office
Monday May 14, 2007 at 0400 ADT

Icy Strait

Today ... Southeast wind 20 knots; seas 4 feet; rain.
Tonight ... East wind 20 knots; seas 4 feet.

Data from McIDAS.

Astronomical Data

Data from the U.S. Naval Observatory for Juneau, Alaska, indicated that for the day and time of the accident the moon was below the horizon.

Gregory D. Salottolo
National Resource Specialist
Meteorology
Draft 12/11/2007