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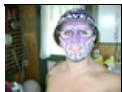


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Oct 31, 2008 11:15 pm US/Eastern

## Lawmakers Outraged After NTSB Report Released



Reporting **Mike Hellgren**

FORESTVILLE, Md. (WJZ) — The preliminary report into a Medevac crash in Prince George's County was released Thursday, and some lawmakers are outraged.

**Mike Hellgren** reports the NTSB preliminary report on the deadliest crash in state history is raising concerns about Andrews Air Force Base, one of the most critical airports in Maryland handling world leaders.

That report found the controller on duty was not qualified to handle the type of emergency landing the Medevac pilot requested.

It has outraged some lawmakers who say that issue should be included in upcoming Congressional hearings.

"That surprises me as a member of Congress who comes in and out of Andrews when I go to Iraq, Afghanistan, whatever, that any helicopter, any plane in distress cannot be helped in a fog situation," said Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger.

Audio tapes obtained by **WJZ** reveal some of pilot Stephen Bunker's last words to dispatch.

"The P.G. Hospital is completely fogged in. We're unable to land there. We're going to be returning to Andrews. I'll give you an ETA in a second. We're going to have to have at least one or two ground units from P.G. County meet us there," said Bunker of Trooper Two.

The Federal Aviation Administration is in charge of staffing air traffic control at Andrews.

In a published report, a FAA spokeswoman says it is not a requirement that controllers are trained to conduct the type of landing pilot Bunker asked for where they give turn-by-turn navigation in an emergency.

That's because controllers at a regional facility



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The preliminary report into a Medevac crash in Prince George's County was released Thursday, and some lawmakers are outraged.

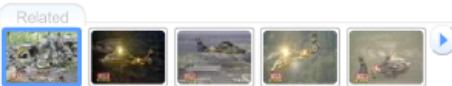
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in Warrenton, Va. can do so, but reports say pilot Bunker was never directed there.

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"It was my understanding that the air traffic controllers there, that none of them is able to vector the pilot in the manner in which he was requesting," said Governor Martin O'Malley.

Another concern was should the chopper have been flying that night with weather quickly deteriorating.

Dispatch: If you tell them you're gonna go, they want you to go.

Pilot Bunker: Uh huh.

Dispatch: That's up to you, man. Can you fly it?

Pilot Bunker: I just learned MedStar going to MedStar, so if they can do it, we can do it.

"I'm not going to make a comment one way or another because I don't know enough about the integral facts, but when there's a life on the line, we do certain things," said Roppersberger.

"Whatever contributed to this tragedy will be fully investigated," said O'Malley.

The National Transportation Safety Board is engaged in a full and detailed investigation of the accident and a full report will be issued upon completion.  
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