

Weather Study – Attachment 1

A summary of an interview conducted with the PADU weather observer on duty at the time of the accident.

METEOROLOGY

ANC20LA015

*Submitted by: Mike Richards
NTSB, AS-30*



INTERVIEW

Date:	February 4, 2020
Time:	About 1000-1020 Alaska standard time
Location:	Telephone
Person Contacted:	Ms. Andrea Huynh, Weather Observer at PADU
Persons Present:	Mr. Mike Richards, National Transportation Safety Board Mr. Brice Banning, National Transportation Safety Board Ms. Mechele Hester, Weather Observer at PADU
Subject:	Accident Investigation ANC20LA015

On February 4, 2020, at approximately 1000 Alaska standard time (AKST), Mr. Mike Richards and Mr. Brice Banning of the National Transportation Safety Board conducted an interview with Ms. Andrea Huynh via telephone. Following the interview, Ms. Huynh was given the opportunity to review this summary to ensure its accuracy and completeness. During the conversation Ms. Huynh reported the following:

She has been a weather observer at Dutch Harbor (PADU) since October 2018 and was on duty at the time of the accident. She did not work as a weather observer anywhere prior to her current position at PADU. On the day of the accident her shift was from 0700 to 1900 AKST.

On the morning of the accident she was making a cup of coffee and heard over the radio that the accident aircraft was taxiing for departure on runway 31. She had already been at the weather observer office for about an hour that morning and had been observing the wind and its peaks. About 0740 she noted a peak wind of 30 knots from 110 degrees from the midfield non-AWOS anemometer, which was disseminated as a remark in the hourly AWOS observation near the top of the next hour. The wind had been coming from the same direction for the previous 24 hours. When she heard the aircraft was taxiing for departure, she went to the radio to advise them of the wind condition, but by the time she got to the radio they were already in their departure roll and past midfield. It was dark at the time, so she did not see the aircraft clearly, but their aircraft lights never came up from off the ground. Afterward she still saw the accident aircraft's blinking red light but was not sure if it was still on the runway or had gone off into the water. Someone from RAVN came into her office and indicated he thought it had gone off the end of the runway, and that he had notified DOT. She called 911. DOT advised that they could not see the aircraft, so she knew it had gone into the water.

It is not common for LifeMed to request weather from her office prior to departures from PADU. Most operators do request weather information on approach to PADU, but not always when departing. Sometime operators do request weather prior to departure and sometimes they don't.

Prior to the accident it had been raining for "quite some time," and she was sure that the runway was wet, but she could not see if there were any puddles on the runway. The runway is designed for water to be able to run off the sides, and she had never heard any previous report of puddles on the runway within her time of employment at PADU. Sometimes there are puddles on the ramp but DOT does a good job of maintaining the runway.

Interview ended at approximately 1020 AKST.

Mike Richards
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