

National Transportation Safety Board
April 21, 2017

To whom this may concern,

My name is Peter Slabaugh and I was the flight instructor on board of N586PU the night of May 29th, 2017. Our planned route of flight was: KLAF-KFWA-KSBN-KLAF. The weather throughout the day had been in and outside of Purdue's weather limitations as a weather system was moving through the area. However, as the night progressed, the weather came back within Purdue's limitations. The wind had died down at the surface level and the precipitation, while there, had also dissipated.

Prior to arriving at the KLAF, I went through all of the weather on my own in order to decide if it was within my personal limitations. I reviewed all of the Metars/TAFs, area forecasts, radar, etc. After reviewing all of this information, I decided that this cross country could be completed safely under my personal minimums as well as Purdue's. This allowed me to come to the airport and have my student make the go/no go decision solely based on her personal minimums as well as Purdue's. The only item that came into question as far as the safe completion of the cross country was the surface wind. At the time, KSBN was well within limitations (from my memory of the weather that night). KFWA was also within limitations for using runway 9.

After both my student and I had reviewed all of the weather along our route of flight as well as got a standard weather briefing, we departed KLAF. Along our route of flight from KLAF-KFWA, we were in and out of light precipitation.

Coming into KFWA, we were told to expect runway 5. While I do not remember specifically what the winds were when we arrived at KFWA, my student did confirm that she was still comfortable with the crosswind. The winds aloft, from my memory, were around 40-45 knots at 2000 feet (based on our G1000). The descent into KFWA was a little bumpy as we followed N580PU in on final. Given the weather and the time of day, I kept close watch on my students control inputs and instruments as we approached runway 5. I saw N580PU in front of us on about a 4-5 mile for the runway. Then I proceeded to look down and enter a grade while my student was tracking inbound. I looked up again on about a 2 mile final to follow along with my student through the landing. At this point, I no longer had N580PU in sight as I had assumed they already completed their landing and were on the upwind for runway 5. On short final, KFWA tower instructed us to go around and side-step to the left of the runway. Our next task

was to find the traffic (N580PU) that we were supposed to follow. After looking both outside as well as trying to find them on our G1000, we were not able to locate the aircraft and were given a vector to follow. At this point I was in contact with the instructor on board of N587PU who eventually relayed a message from the instructor of N580PU that they had crashed. I then departed the field in order to make a call to our dispatch back at Purdue to inform them of the crash. At this point, we were told to continue on the cross country to KSBN. The weather for the remainder of the flight was favorable and we were able to complete our cross country in a safe manner. While not being able to land at KFWA, I am unsure of any weather conditions below about 500 agl.

Purdue does have weather limitations in place in order to prevent flights from happening in unsafe weather conditions. In addition, they also have a risk assessment tool that is completed before each flight which takes into account everything from weather to sleep the previous night. Purdue's weather limitations include wind, visibility, and ceiling. This is all combined with the course that the student is in as well as the time of day (ie. day or night). This is set in place in order to prevent students and instructors from flying in unsafe conditions.

This flight was completed within Purdue limitations as well as personal minimums of both the student and instructor.

Peter Slabaugh
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