

Factual Report – Attachment 4

Statements from the flight crew of United Airlines flight# 1788.

METEOROLOGY

DCA19MA086

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

Questions from NTSB:

- After passing the clouds that had tops of 15000'-12000' while approaching LINKK, was there an area of VMC/clear cloud conditions prior to encountering the IMC around GILLL?

- Assuming some VMC prior to encountering the IMC conditions near GILLL (so you saw what you were approaching), did the IMC conditions appear to stretch from near the ground to above your flight level? Or how would describe what you were immediately approaching cloud-wise? If so, what would you estimate the tops of those IMC conditions to have been?

- Most important: Can you provide any further information as to exactly where and/or at what altitude along your descent you went from VMC to IMC near GILLL?

- Upon entering these IMC conditions, did you recall any immediate or near immediate changes in (1) crosswind and/or turbulence or (2) OAT/SAT (even if you would not deem it significant)? Did water appear on the windshield? If any of this occurred and was not immediate with encountering the IMC, how long after encountering the IMC did it occur?

Richards Michael

Sensitivity:

Confidential

From: Plantz, Jeff <[REDACTED]@united.com>

Sent: Wednesday, May 8, 2019 2:25 PM

To: Richards Michael [REDACTED]@ntsb.gov>; Lawrence David [REDACTED]@ntsb.gov>

Subject: United Airlines Support - NTSB Atlas Air Accident Investigation - Flight Crew Statements and Updates to Requested Items

Sensitivity: Confidential

Dear David and Michael,

Here is what the pilots recollected. Please confirm receipt of the information. I hope it helps with your investigation.

Sincerely, Jeff

Captain [REDACTED]

1. During the entire approach and descent we encountered continuous light to moderate turbulence.
2. In and out for clouds from approximately 17000ft MSL to 5000ft MSL on the arrival to ILS26L at IAH.
3. Did not hear or have any visual contact with Atlas Air.
4. Only occasional ground visual contact through broken cloud base below us.
5. We deviated 15NM to 25NM SouthWest of the final approach course of Runway 26L for weather avoidance of Heavy Thunderstorm 20NM to 30NM East of IAH Runway 26L with Thunderstorm building between GARR and VANN intersections on the arrival ILS26L.
6. After clearing the Thunderstorm area we were able to intercept the ILS26L Localizer and continue the arrival and approach to landing.
7. Did not encounter any Wind Shear Alert or Warnings during the Arrival and Descent.
8. In and out of Cloud Tops during the Arrival until below approximately 5000ftMSL.
9. Did not notice any significant change in Wind Direction or Speed during the arrival.
10. The convective activity for that time during the arrival and season was normal and not unusual.

First Officer [REDACTED]

1. I'm not sure where we entered the clouds (I believe they were around 12k feet), but as soon as we entered the clouds, it was moderate. Was not bad though. I believe we stayed in IMC a while while descending down. I don't think we truly "broke out" until around 7k feet. As soon as we broke out, it was much smoother. I don't recall there being much, if any, VMC conditions until then.

2. At Gill, we were still in IMC. If we broke out, it was still very quickly back into IMC. We elected to head west because of the weather by the arrival of 26L. Prior to entering IMC, we could see the base of the clouds. Cloud was was nothing special. We weren't painting anything on the radar west where we were heading. I don't recall there being any actively growing clouds that you can see in the summer time. Just looked normal to me.

3. As far as I can recall, when we entered IMC around LINKK, we didn't break out until 7k feet or so when I told controllers it was a smooth ride under it. If we broke out in between, I don't recall. The ride through the clouds was moderate though, nothing worse.

4. Sorry, no I do not recall any of this. Seemed like a normal flight to us.

Jeff Plantz
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