



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Training Captain Statement

Lynn Spencer
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: March 10, 2022
Person Contacted: Aaron Graszler (Training Captain)
Contact # [REDACTED]
NTSB Accident Number: ERA22LA150

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the individual named above:

Mr. Aaron Graszler was contacted by phone on March 10, 2022, at 1247 EST. He was called at [REDACTED]. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]. Participating in the call was also Neil Rose, the Vice President of Flight Operations, who provided a phone number of [REDACTED] and an email as [REDACTED].

At the beginning of the interview, Aaron was advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation and chose to include Mr. Rose on the call as the VP of Flight Ops.

Aaron was acting as the PIC and training captain in the right seat. Aman was sitting in the left seat. He was typed on the airplane on February 10, 2022, at Flight Safety, Greensboro. (I requested all training records.) They are not required to do Initial Operating Experience (IOE) as an "on demand" operator, but they do at least 25 hours. Aman had 34 hours at the time of the accident. He had flown with another training captain and then flew with Aaron 29.7 hours, not including the accident flight.

The accident flight was the first flight of the day. Aman was responsible for preflight planning and filing the flight plan. Aaron follows all of that up as a backup to ensure that the numbers are correct. They spoke about the potential of weather conditions. CLE was filed as a weather alternate. They also discussed Pittsburgh as a performance alternate depending on runway conditions at AGC. The preflight and flight was normal, with no malfunctions or anomalies that would have precluded normal operation; however, they did get a Crew Alerting System (CAS) message of L ENG BLEED FAIL during icing conditions in the climb-out. They ran the QRH checklist, and it returned to normal, and they continued the flight. They got the same message on descent into AGC and they reperformed the same checklist. The CAS message L ENG BLEED FAIL disappeared again. They left the switches and setting in the checklist configuration, so that the left-wing anti-icing was getting bleed

air from right engine. That was the only abnormal item on the flight. Aaron listened to ATIS while Aman was looking for alternates. They had briefed earlier that they knew per the Flight Ops bulletin that they could not land if the runway was contaminated. The ATIS stated that there was slush on taxiway and ramp, no indication of runway. Previous landing traffic reported landing condition good – 5. He recalls that the controller stated that this report was 14 or 40 minutes earlier.

They continued the approach assuming the runway was only wet since there were no other reports other than light snow. They discussed various alternates. Pittsburgh Approach advised them that a previous flight reported runway conditions as good and provided vectors for the ILS 28. They used a takeoff approach flap setting for icing conditions. Aaron stated that he had no reason to believe that braking action was less than good, so he let Aman fly the approach. The approach was stabilized, and they switched over to tower, who advised that a snowplow was on the runway. Aaron considered this an indication that the airport was taking care of the runway in the light snow. After landing, he recalled that the runway shoulders were obscured by snow, yet he could see the center line. He recalls no abnormality with touchdown within the first third of the runway on speed, “no overspeed. From touchdown speed to 100 kts he remembered that there was not significant deceleration; and the rate of deceleration seemed slower than normal through 80 kts. At some point in the landing, he called for maximum braking, which occurred, although there did not seem to be the appropriate deceleration, and there was no feeling of the anti-skid working. He didn’t know if they were sliding, and he was on the brakes with Aman. He was fixating on the remaining runway and knowing that they were still too fast for the runway remaining. He started to apply emergency brake slowly and gradually . . . there was no change although he locked it to its detent. After that, they were “along for the ride.” Toward the end of the runway, he saw that there was no flat land at the departure end. They attempted to use the rudder pedals to steer left and they started to slide sideways. He recalls feeling that they were in the grass and wondered when the right landing gear was going to give out. It did and then their deceleration rate increased with nose to the south, right wing leading the skid. The nose was facing back east when they came to rest on the embankment on the departure end of runway 28.

I asked about the approach. He stated that the autopilot was disengaged by 100ft AGL and that it came off before he announced the runway in sight. I asked him if he was looking at Aman’s speed or glideslope in the last 300 feet of the approach and he responded “No,” because he was looking for the runway environment. At 200ft AGL (at minimums) he saw the approach lights so they continued to descend to 100ft Above Touchdown Zone Elevation, and then he could see the runway environment, so they landed, I was focused on looking outside for runway environment or approach lights for my duties as pilot monitoring. He stated that it would be accurate to say that he did not know for sure if they were on speed. I asked when he last noted the position on the glideslope, and he stated that it was at 200ft AGL, because he was looking outside per pilot monitoring duties. He stated that they don’t have thrust reversers and did not use aerodynamic braking. The nose landed shortly after the mains. He stated that they do have speed brakes and he called for them, but he does not know if Aman deployed them upon landing.

I asked if there was anything else he wished to add, and he stated that he could not recall hearing any runway condition report after the snowplow left the runway. They had just swept the runway, but he does not recall the tower updating the runway condition as being anything but good. He stated that Aman also did not recall feeling the anti-skid braking system going on and off.

Neil had some questions:

1. Was approach stabilized? “Yes”
2. Did the airspeed meet the stabilized approach criteria? “Yes.” There was a point that Vref was indicating 1-2 kts above their FMS calculated speed. Landing was in first third of runway, which was 6,500 ft in length. The 1000 ft marks were partially obscured, but he thinks they landed by 1,500 ft. Nose landed shortly after mains.

The call ended at 1341 EST.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on March 11, 2022. He replied on March 15, 2022, at 1448 EDT with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to him on March 16, 2022.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

IOE Pilot Statement

Lynn Spencer
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: March 11, 2022
Person Contacted: Aman Lal (IOE Pilot)
Contact # [REDACTED]
NTSB Accident Number: ERA22LA150

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the individual named above:

Mr. Aman Lal was contacted via a Microsoft Teams meeting on March 11, 2022, at 1400 EST. He provided a phone number of [REDACTED] and an email address of an e-mail address of [REDACTED]. Participating in the call per Aman's wishes was also Neil Rose, the Vice President of Flight Operations, who provided a phone number of [REDACTED] and an email as [REDACTED].

At the beginning of the interview, Aman was advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation and chose to include Mr. Rose on the call as the VP of Flight Ops.

They started monitoring the weather the day before for mission planning purposes. He got up at 445 am and took a short nap and was refreshed. He was concerned about the weather and was looking at the weather reports while getting ready. During the van ride, he told Aaron that he (Aman) would do all the flight planning, signing of paperwork and ordering services while Aaron did the external preflight, refueling, getting passengers. Before IOE started they had discussed how Aman would take more PIC roles and Aaron SIC role toward the end of IOE so that he would satisfactorily complete the IOE syllabus. Once they arrived at the FBO they looked at the weather. It had improved from the day before. He considered CLE as an alternate since it was VFR, but also had PIT as a performance alternate in the weigh and balance. He added as much fuel as the performance calculations allowed. For performance numbers he used a wet runway to calculate runway requirements. It showed 4,900 using wet runway. He added 15% with flaps set for TO/APPR (ice) (limited to takeoff flaps approach flap setting to operate into icing conditions if unable to confirm that the wings are free of ice.) Following AFM guidance, he added the landing factor adjustment for a Part 91K flight, and his final runway-needed number was 5,800 ft for runway 28. This is what he considered his worst-case scenario if the RCC had 5/5/5 which it wasn't.

As for fuel planning, they were landing weight restricted and he uploaded the max fuel permitted. It was 2500 lbs of fuel at start-up. They boarded the passenger and tested the brakes at low speed less than 5 knots. When Aman considers his hours flying N903JT and how he uses the brakes, he feels as if he has to brake “hard” given how it typically decelerates; however, he feels he has full rudder deflection and full use of brakes.

They took off and turned on engine anti-ice. The flight was normal, and Aaron got to work running numbers for CLE and PIT, Aman played limited role in getting numbers and METAR/ ATIS data due to being Pilot Flying. He looked at Youngstown and noted that it was VFR with a longer runway in case PIT conditions dropped. Most of the numbers were coming in around 5500 in the current conditions. He believes that he saw 5-5-5 runway condition report in the METAR. During descent they got moderate ice for a couple seconds and got the left engine bleed fail CAS, they ran the Quick Reference Handbook (QRH) and the right engine bleed supplied bleed air to the left wing anti-ice.

He did a standard approach briefing and noted that they were in icing conditions and using takeoff approach flap settings. At Flight Safety, he was taught to fly approaches at Vref, during callouts he asked for 120 KIAS, which was about 2 kts above Vref, 1 kt above green dot. Aaron instructed him to fly at 128 KIAS, which was Vref +10. Vref was 118. “I thought it was a bit excessive.” When doing the runway calculations, he used Vref but he assumed that he would be landing at Vref. He began the approach and noted that the thrust levers were near idle at an N1 of about 38%. He stated again that this Vref +10 was different than he was used to. The airport said that braking action was good and there were snow plows on the runway. They had run the 5-5-5 numbers en route so he figured that the runways were good. He recalled Aaron advising him of patches of snow on the taxiways, but he did not recall hearing about any snow on the runway. Aaron called the “Approach lights in sight” then lost them prior to decision altitude. At Decision Altitude he called approach lights in sight and Aman looked up and saw the lights and said “Continue.” There was a bit of an offset on the localizer, so he was paying close attention. At about 150 feet, Aaron announced runway in sight and Aman saw runway and said “Landing” he began maneuvering to align with the runway. Given the visibility, he could see about a third of the runway and it appeared plowed. He believed he had the aiming point in sight. He brought the thrust levers to idle above the threshold and pushed the nose down because the airplane tries to pitch up. The airplane touched down softly and he went on the toe brakes and did not feel anything. Aman was not sure exactly where the touchdown occurred because the rest of the touchdown zone markings were covered in snow. He felt nothing so he went to max braking. He could feel the braking action a little bit and got no audible warnings nor any brake or Anti-Skid related CAS message, but he thought to himself, “This is not a good braking action” and he realized that the braking condition was then NIL. The runway went from plowed to obscured as they continued down the runway. He used the speedbrakes as soon as Aaron called for them. When Aaron called the second time for max brakes, Aaron got on the brakes also. The airplane slowed down the first third of the runway, but the condition of the runway worsened so that you could not make out the markings (he could see only the runway end lights), and the deceleration was “not there” in the final 2/3rds of the runway. It seemed like they had no braking action. He wondered if he was sliding on ice or if the brakes failed. They applied the emergency brake even though they had no visual notification that the brakes had failed. “In the simulator when you pulled the emergency brake, you can stop the airplane fine with just a half inch of emergency brake pulled. Aaron followed NORMAL BRAKE FAIL procedure and gradually pulled the alternate brakes until it was fully set. Aaron applied left rudder to aim for the last taxi-way rather than the cliff. The airplane went to its side and slid. There was no traction.”

Any more questions? Aaron stated that the emergency response people stated to him how slippery the runways were. Given their visibility of around 2500 – 3500 RVR, they really could only see the first third of the runway.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on March 14, 2022. He replied on March 14, 2022, at 1528 EST with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to him on March 14, 2022.