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Aviation Accident Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: February 27, 2025
Subject: ERA25LA130, Passenger Statement
Contact: Josiah Murphy

Josiah was contacted via telephone to discuss the accident of N43DN. The following is a summary of that conversation.

Josiah stated that he is a student pilot and that he was in the co-pilot seat, but he was not piloting the airplane and had not worked with his father on the flight planning details. He stated that they were going to an airport near the Killington Ski Resort. Josiah commented that the airport was in a valley and that it was MVFR (marginal visual flight rules) near the airport. The initial route was supposed to take them to the mouth of the valley, but because of the weather, they started towards another airport that lined up with the destination airport away from the IFR conditions.

Josiah continued that at some point, there were clouds to the side of them and in front of them. It quickly felt like they entered a point where it did not seem like they could turn around without getting into the clouds of a mountain, so his dad elected to climb over the clouds. As they began to climb over the clouds, they entered clouds accidentally. Josiah commented that he looked out the window and could see water droplets forming on the wings and he noticed that the water was quickly freezing.

While in the cloud climbing, Josiah said that he asked his dad "do we need carb heat" and his dad replied "yes". Josiah applied the carb heat gently, but the engine performance immediately dropped off. He continued that at some point, they also had too much attitude and not enough power, and the airspeed started to "fall". He commented that his dad was focused on flying the airplane. Josiah again noticed the airspeed dropping and commented that they were also falling. He commented that they were either in a spin at this point or that they were close to spinning. He stated that his father was able to regain control of the airspeed. When they attempted to

level off, they stalled again, and the airplane entered a dive. Josiah pointed at the vertical speed indicator, and it was "pegged" and that they were doing 2000ft (a minute) or more descending. He commented to his father that they "we are diving". His dad pulled up again and they struggled to level off. The airplane was "porpoising". Josiah stated that he eventually saw trees out of the pilot's side window and thinks they may have porpoised one more time. They were in a banking turn when his dad "yanked" back on the yoke one last time before they contacted trees. He remembered hitting the trees and closing his eyes and shortly after they were on the ground.

Josiah was asked if he was doing okay after the accident. He said "alive". He was asked to describe the extent of his injuries. Described his injuries to the IIC.

He stated that everyone was wearing their seatbelts and that his seatbelt consisted of a lap belt and shoulder harness.

Josiah was asked for his date of birth, and he provided [REDACTED]. He was asked for his email address, and he provided [REDACTED].

Josiah was asked if he had any questions. He replied that he did not and want to know the requirements for continuing his flight training as a student pilot. He was advised to speak to his Federal Aviation Administration contact.

-End of conversation