

FAA San Antonio Field Office

Dear Christian Marales,

In regards to the accident occurring on June 26th, 2017;

I have been the airport manager at McCampbell-Porter Airport and Alfred. C, "Bubba" Thomas Airport for approximately 2 ½ years. I have 5 years experience as a commercial pilot and flight instructor and 5 ½ years experience as an airport manager.

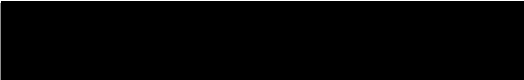
We train our airport employees on how to safely maneuver around the airport. We always carry a radio and listen for traffic when we mow the airfield. We always stop and look carefully before crossing any portion of the runway. All weather station or other repair technicians are escorted to their location by airport staff.

The driver of the pickup that caused the accident was not one of our employees but had volunteered without compensation to cut and bale hay at the far corner of the airport. The driver of the pickup and trailer had cut and baled hay under the previous airport manager on several occasions over the past 10 years. This is the first time I, as the current airport manager, allowed Donald Young to cut hay on the airfield and I briefed him thoroughly to stay at least 50 feet away from the runway at all times and to move all equipment at least 500 ft. from the runway at the end of each day. We examined an aerial photo and discussed the safest way to maneuver around the airport. In addition, we travelled around the airport together as I pointed out the places he was not allowed to go and safe places to store his equipment. The runway was always considered as off limits at all times. He was never given permission to cross the runway at any time.

According to conversations with Donald Young, he told me that on the day of the accident, Instead of going around the longer and safer route and possibly getting stuck in an area that was known to be more saturated after the previous night's rain, Mr. Young decided to take the quicker and drier route across midfield. In addition, I believe that Donald Young did stop to look down the runway for traffic and did not see anything initially. Started moving across, then saw the landing aircraft, hesitated for a brief second then had no choice but to try to move across the rest of the runway continuing as fast as he could to the other side.

Safety is and has always been my first priority as airport manager. Unfortunately in the above mentioned accident, the driver was told how to safely maneuver around the airport and did not do as instructed.

Sincerely,


Paul N. Lehnert, Airport Manager