



Federal Aviation Administration

Inspector Statement

Date: 14 February 2017

From: Cody Ingemansen

Subject: N2179L accident investigation debrief with student pilot Wenhai Mu.

On February 14th 2017, Mr. Wenhai Mu arrived at the San Diego Flight Standards District Office to discuss the accident that occurred on the 12th of February involving N2179L near Ramona, CA. He identified himself as the Student Pilot on board for that flight day and a Mr. Clarence Su as the Certified Flight Instructor; he also identified the aircraft passenger as Shaira Noor. Mr. Mu stated that he arrived in the United States on 1 March 2016 and that after studying English language for 4 months he enrolled in the pilot program at American Aviation Academy located on Gillespie Field. He estimated his total flying hours as 60 and added that he had been flying with Clarence Su since the 14 of Jan 2017 but had not flown since 3 Feb due to weather. He also stated that Mr. Su was “like a little brother to him” and that they were also roommates.

Mr. Mu detailed the events of the 12th of February as follows: He woke up at 0915 that morning after going to bed at 0000 the night before. The flight that day was scheduled by Mr. Su for 1300. Mr. Su arrived from a previous instruction flight in N2179L and called for a fuel “top-off” while Mr. Mu started his preflight walk around. Mr. Mu observed the aircraft being fueled, however he didn’t look in the tanks himself to verify, he turned on aircraft power and noted that the gauges read “full”.

During Mr. Mu’s preflight, Shaira Noor showed up at the aircraft with a David Clark headset and a small bag. Next, Mr. Su arrived and informed Mu that Shaira would be flying with them that day. Mr. Mu did not account for Shaira on his original weight and balance calculation and didn’t recalculate it after learning of the additional passenger. Mu stated that his seat belt took several attempts to latch and when it finally latched the outer housing split open but it appeared function normally.

Mr. Mu took off from KSEE at approximately 1325 with a flight planned to RNM Ramona Ca area for flight instruction and then returning to KSEE upon completion of practice maneuvers. Once over the Ramona dirt strip practice area, Mu performed 2ea slow flight practice drills at 4500ft holding 60 knots with full flaps. Once completed, Mr. Su instructed Mu to climb to 4700ft and recover. Next, Mu performed 2ea power off stalls and 3ea unusual attitude checks, noting that it was for the first time with a passenger on board.

While still over the Ramona dirt strip, Mu did 2ea simulated engine failures at 4,500ft and recovered at an estimated 500ft then turned east and headed toward Pamo Valley. Once over Pamo Valley with a North bound heading he turned left downwind to a South bound heading and the Mr. Su instructed him to turn left towards the East, Mu looked up and said “Mountain, Mountain”.

Now heading east towards a mountain the Certified Flight Instructor took control of the aircraft saying “I have control, I have the plane”. Mr. Mu stated that the aircraft was running fine and that there were no power output problems. Mr. Su said “I will show you performance like Big Bear” then gave full power and leaned the mixture flew straight for 5 seconds then said “Oh Shit” shortly before the aircraft crashed into the mountain. The next thing that Mr. Mu remembers was being unable to move and Mr. Su being out of the plane. Mr. Su checked on Shaira and found her dead located in the back right seat and then cut Mu’s seat belt. Mr. Mu exited the aircraft and tried to pull Shaira out of the aircraft but was unable to remove her.

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