



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Stephen Stein
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety – Western Pacific Region

NTSB Accident Number: WPR18FA141
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N2377R; Cessna 182
Accident Location: Cascade, Idaho
Accident Date: May 13, 2018

Note: The following interviews were documented by the Investigator-In-Charge (IIC), Stephen Stein.

Interview #1 Summary

Drew Gwynn
Friend of Accident Pilot

Interview Date and Time: May 16, 2018; 0933 MT

Mr. Gwynn stated that he flew the accident airplane on April 27, 2018 and returned on April 29, 2018. He refueled the airplane in Billings, Montana and then topped it off in Boise, Idaho when he returned the airplane to the owner. During the accident flight, the transponder stopped working for about 30 minutes when the light disappeared; however, the rest of the flight was uneventful.



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Interview #1 Summary

Brad Gallagher
Friend of Accident Pilot

Interview Date and Time: May 15, 2018; 1739 MT

Mr. Gallagher reported that the pilot had visited him at his home on the morning of the accident. At the time of the accident, they had known each other about 3 years. During this time, the accident pilot reviewed weather conditions and discussed some of his flight planning with Mr. Gallagher. He recalled that the purpose of the accident flight was to park his airplane in a hangar he had recently purchased in McCall, Idaho. Mr. Gallagher stated that he was a flight nurse for a local hospital in Boise, Idaho at the time of the accident. The accident pilot last glanced at the weather conditions before leaving Mr. Gallagher's home at 0930, which appeared "suboptimal" for flight conditions. Mr. Gallagher reported that he believed the weather conditions at the time showed 700 foot ceilings in McCall, Idaho and rising. The accident pilot was also using highway cameras along highway 55; some showed promising conditions and some did not. The conditions as reported by the pilot sounded "marginal" to Mr. Gallagher, who was not a pilot. Shortly after, the accident pilot left Mr. Gallagher's home, but told his friend that he would continue to check weather and would likely wait until 1300 or 1400 to depart, but only if the weather improved.

Mr. Gallagher reported that the accident pilot typically flew a direct flight path between Boise, Idaho, and McCall, Idaho.



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Interview #1 Summary

Jay Mentzer
Friend of Accident Pilot

Interview Date and Time: May 16, 2018; 0850 MT

Mr. Mentzer stated that he had known the accident pilot for about 15 years and had been close with him for the 10 years that preceded the accident. He remarked that the accident pilot purchased the accident airplane about 3 years before the accident in Phoenix and that he had never flown in the airplane. He was working on his instrument rating at the time of the accident. The accident pilot lived in Boise, Idaho, but would frequently stay with his girlfriend in McCall, Idaho. He had recently purchased a hangar in McCall, Idaho the week before the accident and was going to move there.

Mr. Mentzer spoke with the accident pilot the day before the accident. The accident pilot informed Mr. Mentzer that he planned to leave for a river trip the Tuesday after the accident and wanted to have the airplane at his hangar during some renovations.



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Interview #1 Summary

Josh Michna “Guffy”
Friend of Accident Pilot

Interview Date and Time: May 28, 2018; 1655 MT

Mr. Michna stated that he holds a commercial pilot certificate with ratings for multi-engine land and single-engine land. He knew the accident pilot for about 10 years at the time of the accident and lived with him for a brief period a few months before the accident. The accident pilot had been staying with his girlfriend in McCall, Idaho and his personal effects were being stored in a hangar he had purchased about 12 days before the accident. The remaining items the accident pilot needed to move to McCall, Idaho included his airplane and his truck. Mr. Michna remarked that the accident pilot had just purchased his “dream hangar.”

Mr. Michna had previously flown with the accident pilot in his own airplane and the accident airplane. While the transponder worked normally about 90% of the time, at times when he turned the radio master switch on, the transponder would not engage until after takeoff. The accident pilot had the transponder troubleshooted multiple times, but the service technicians could not trace the issue. In the 15 hours Mr. Michna flew in the accident airplane, he did not experience any further issues. Mr. Michna described the accident pilot as meticulous and conservative pilot.

Mr. Michna reported that the accident pilot's life "revolved around the hangar" in the 4-5 months before the transaction was completed. During this time, he planned his renovation and obtained permits. He discussed his planned hangar renovations with Mr. Michna frequently. The purpose of the accident flight was for him to take measurements for the renovation and to park the airplane in the hangar; however, the pilot may have planned to return to Boise temporarily to collect his truck. The pilot had been moving his belongings into the hangar and had moved the bulk of it into his hangar the week before the accident.



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Interview #1 Summary

Katielynn Strode
Accident Pilot's Girlfriend

Interview Date and Time: August 9, 2018; 0814 PT

Ms. Strode stated that she had been dating the accident pilot for a couple of years at the time of the accident. According to her recount, the accident pilot had moved to Boise, Idaho in October 2017 to help his family and would periodically travel to McCall, Idaho to see Ms. Strode. In December 2017, the accident pilot discovered that a hangar would soon be available for purchase in McCall. The accident pilot had planned to become self-employed in a less urban area and the purchase of this hangar was aligned with his future plans. Initially, the pilot was scheduled to close escrow on the hangar on May 1, 2018; however, this date was postponed to May 8, 2018 due to the pilot's availability. Once finalized, the accident pilot moved all his personal effects into the hangar via a trailer. He drove a trailer up to the hangar on May 8 and then worked in the hangar the rest of the week. The Friday before the accident, he returned to Boise and returned to the hangar with a utility trailer. He planned to relocate the airplane to his hangar on Sunday, the day of the accident. The accident pilot was looking forward to finishing the hangar and had spent many nights researching designs for the interior.



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Interview #1 Summary

Thorsten Kampe
Pilot

Interview Date and Time: July 19, 2018; 1020 PT

On the day of the accident, Mr. Kampe departed McCall, Idaho about 1010 and was bound for Boise, Idaho. He performed weather research prior to his departure, which showed a broken or overcast ceiling (he could not recall which) at 3,000 ft mean sea level (MSL) at Boise. The weather at McCall showed a 2,000 ft broken layer with visibility more than 6 statute miles. He flew along the Payette River and then flew over Smith's Ferry, a few miles from the accident site, at which point he observed a drizzle. The clouds near the accident site were low as he flew over a ridgeline at 200 ft above ground level. He opined that the cloud ceiling was about 5,200 ft MSL at Smith's Ferry about 1040 local time. From his research, Mr. Kampe thought the ceiling would be about 7,000 ft MSL. When he observed the deteriorating weather condition, he landed in Cascade, Idaho about 1050.



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Interview #1 Summary

Joshua Nalles
Employee of Western Aircraft, Fixed Based Operator (FBO)

Interview Date and Time: May 15, 2018; 1500 MT

Mr. Nalles stated that the accident had rented a tie down space from the FBO and occasionally purchased fuel from them. To his knowledge, the accident pilot only purchased fuel from Western Aircraft; however, there were other fuel options at the airport. The accident pilot most recently purchased fuel from them on April 27, 2018. Mr. Nalles stated that he had spoken with the accident pilot about 5-6 times in the one and a half years the pilot was using the FBO's services. Their relationship was professional. On the day of the accident, the pilot entered the FBO and had a brief conversation with Mr. Nalles. During this time, the pilot did not disclose his destination, but did have some luggage with him that included a backpack and some boxes. They spoke for about 5 minutes and Mr. Nalles recalled that the accident pilot seemed coherent.

The weather at the time included some rain, clouds, and poor visibility.