



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Samantha Link
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: May 20, 2020
Person Contacted: Mr. Paul Richards (Certified Flight Instructor)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR20LA152

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation with Mr. Richards he reported the following:

- Mr. Richards has been flight instructing for at least 4,000 hours.
- The student pilot started flight instruction with Mr. Richards in September 2019. Mr. Richards was his only instructor.
 - The student pilot flew about once a week for about 4 hours and was working towards his private pilot certificate.
 - Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the student pilot had to take a short break early March through mid-April 2020 because Mr. Richards was unable to flight instruct.
 - At the time of the accident the student pilot had about 50 flight hours.
 - The student pilot preferred to fly Cirrus airplanes and most of his hours were exclusively in the accident airplane (N883PJ).
 - The student pilot was a very good student. He was intelligent and an overall above average student. He had a good skill level for his training.
 - Mr. Richards was very surprised to hear about the accident because the student was very capable and flew well.
 - The student pilot's landings have been consistently well.
 - Mr. Richards said that the student pilot was an exceptional, very happy person. He had just gotten a promotion at work and had a lovely family.
 - He mentioned that he was unaware of any extraneous stressors or issues in his life. The student pilot does have a career at a hospital, but he did not seem abnormally stressed with the pandemic or anything.

- Mr. Richards and the student pilot flew the flight from Van Nuys to Santa Maria at least two times prior to any of the student's solo cross country flights. Mr. Richards was almost positive it was three times.
- The accident flight was the student pilot's third solo flight and its purpose was to build solo time.
 - His first solo flight was in the traffic pattern occurred a few weeks ago. He couldn't recall exactly when, but it was after Mr. Richards returned from the pandemic break.
 - His second solo flight was from Van Nuys to Santa Maria about one week prior to the accident (the same route as the accident flight).
 - After this flight, the student pilot mentioned that he was grateful for Mr. Richards and that he really loved flying.
 - All previous solo flights went well.
- The plan for the accident flight was for the student pilot to fly from Van Nuys, CA to Santa Maria, CA and make a full stop. He was then to proceed to Camarillo, CA and make a full stop before returning to Van Nuys.
- The student pilot topped the airplane off with fuel before departing. Mr. Richards stated would provide fuel receipts.
- Mr. Richards mentioned that when dealing with air traffic control the student pilot would add "student solo" at the end of calls so air traffic control was aware he was a newer pilot.
- The airplane was in good condition and no issues were noted prior to the accident flight.
 - The airplane was current in its annual inspection and all equipment was current. The airplane did not immediately come out of maintenance.
 - He did not recall the airplane's last maintenance, but it occurred within the past 100 hours. He stated that he will provide copies of the logbooks.
- Mr. Richards noted that the student pilot had very thorough preflights. He would closely check everything over and he would make sure the airplane was not due for any maintenance (The last/next maintenance was noted in a log for pilots to monitor.)

END.

Submitted by: Samantha Link