

Power Lines Plane Crash Causes Fatalities



Mohammad Hussain Musawi, center, stands with his flight instructor, left, and Darin Chung, co-founder of the Afghan American Development Group, a nonprofit that helps former Afghan military aviation personnel with refugee resettlement assistance in the U.S., at a flight hangar in Independence, Ore. on April 7, 2023. (Nikki Chung via AP)

All 3 Men were Afghan Air Force Pilots who resettled as refugees

AP- A former Afghan Air Force pilot training for a commercial license in Oregon ignored his flight instructor's advice to not return to a small airport because of low visibility. The plane later crashed, killing the pilot and the other two passengers on board, according to a preliminary federal report of the accident released Friday.

All three men killed in the accident Dec. 16 were former Afghan pilots who fought with the American military. Local nonprofit Salem for Refugees said it resettled the men in the Salem area last spring.

The pilot, Mohammad Hussain Musawi, 35, and the two passengers, Mohammad Bashir Safdari, 35, and Ali Jan Ferdawsi, 29, died in the crash near Independence, a small city in the Willamette Valley about 12 miles (19 kilometers) southwest of Salem. The National Transportation Safety Board's report said an examination of the airframe and the engine of the Cessna 172G airplane revealed no mechanical malfunctions or failures. The plane's owner allowed the pilot to use the Cessna to get his private pilot's certificate and to obtain his instrument rating and commercial pilot's certificate, the report said.

Musawi told his flight instructor that he and a pilot-rated passenger would fly from Independence to the McMinnville airport to practice instrument approaches, the re-

port said. The two small cities are about 30 miles apart by road.

Two approaches were made at McMinnville before the plane landed. The flight instructor, who was electronically monitoring the flight, called Musawi and advised him not to return to Independence because of low visibility of about 500 feet due to fog, the report said.

Musawi told the instructor that he would fly to Independence, assess the situation and either attempt to land, divert to Salem or return to McMinnville, the report said. He also said he had picked up a second pilot-rated passenger in McMinnville. Air traffic control recordings indicate the pilot made two position reports on approach that included his intention to land in Independence, the report said. He also electronically activated the pilot-controlled landing lights to medium intensity.

The pilot overshot the runway to the east, overcorrected and overshot it to the west and came to rest inverted on the edge of an open field next to airport property, the report said.

A fire reduced the fuselage to ash, but the wings did not catch on fire, the report said. The engine had separated from the airplane, and it was found about 60 feet (18 meters) northwest of the main wreckage, the report said.

The plane likely first hit an 80-foot utility pole, located about 60 feet (18 meters) south-east of the wreckage.

The pole was in three pieces. The top 4 feet (1.22 meters) of the pole shattered and was strewn in the wreckage. The middle section, about 12 feet (3.66 meters) in length, fell onto the right wing, and about 69 feet (21 meters) of the original pole remained standing.

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