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Office of Aviation Safety

Date: August 15, 2023
Subject: CEN23LA363 - Pilot's Statement
Contact: Philip Nichols

This is a copy of the pilot's statement received via email on August 15, 2023:

Over this past weekend, Saturday August 12, 2023, I flew a familiarization flight in Lansing. AMF1022 and 1021. I rode along and was informed on company procedures at the Lansing Base. The rest of the weekend I had off, including Monday August 14. Monday evening I went over my charts and forms on my company iPad checking they were all current and up to date. After which I went to bed and received around 7 and a half hours of sleep. Waking up around 5:15 for my 6:15 showtime.

Starting in the morning I was assigned reserve, and around 6am I was informed that a 1900 pilot had called sick and I would need to cover for run 1304 to KCIU. Upon arrival at my aircraft I was told that I would be making a stop at KPLN first, before completing my first stop at KCIU. These are both unfamiliar airports to me, so I tried to look up their information in the Airport Briefing Guide so as to know what to do upon arrival at each place, and look for any procedures specific to these airports. Shortly after arrival to the plane I looked over the maintenance logbook for the aircraft. Everything seemed good, and the next maintenance item would not be due for multiple days. I then finished the Originating Checklist and while I was finishing UPS arrived and started to load my aircraft while I was trying to complete my walkaround. After loading, I double checked the weather and did my FRAT, then

called for release. I got the weather and received my IFR clearance, then started engines. I completed the After Start Checklist, called for taxi and taxied to runway 10R, where I completed the Taxi Checklist, Run Up, and Before Takeoff Checklist. Tower reported new weather at this time. Information Bravo: Winds 040 at 12 knots gusting 18, with 4 miles of visibility, rain and mist. After getting the weather, I called for Takeoff Clearance, did my takeoff flow, followed by my Checklist upon coming to a stop on the runway.

After completing the Runway Items Checklist, I advanced the power levers to 400 Torque, released the brakes and tried to set power for 1500 Torque. This took a little longer than usual, and I was eyes down for a little bit longer. After looking back up I realized I was drifting slightly right of centerline and began to correct with left rudder. I reached 100 KIAS and began to rotate. After reaching about 30 to 40 feet the aircraft began to roll to the right and I tried to counteract with left rudder but was unable to provide sufficient left rudder to do so. I tried to bank the aircraft to the left to turn back to the runway, by this time I had drifted over taxiway Bravo. To try to stop the rolling I pulled power back and then started to descend but was only able to slightly bank the aircraft to the left, not enough to get back over the runway. At this point I was starting to believe that the rudder trim was too far to the right to be able to control the aircraft properly. I was still descending and tried to come back to at least the taxiway but it was hard to judge how far off the ground I was in the poor visibility and I ended up hitting the grass off to the right of the taxiway.

After hitting the ground I slid to a stop and then assessed myself and surroundings for damage. Then I contacted tower that I was okay, and began to secure the aircraft. At this time I realized that the rudder trim was full right. Next I exited the aircraft and was taken to be seen by medical professionals.

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