

Investigators Conclude Student Pilot Intentionally Crashed Airplane

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Photo: Michelle McLoughlin / Reuters

Police and FBI are looking into possible motives behind the crash of a small airplane in Connecticut on Tuesday.

(Newswire.net -- October 13, 2016) -- The National Transportation Safety Board (NSB) concluded that the crash was "intentional", however, they have not disclosed any facts behind the conclusion. "All windows are open at this point," East Hartford police Lt. Josh Litwin [told reporters on Wednesday](#).

The 28-year-old student pilot died when the small two engine Piper Seneca PA-34 airplane crashed Tuesday near the offices of defense contractor Pratt & Whitney, who manufacture jet engines. Trainee pilot Feras M. Freitekh and his instructor, Arian Prevala, departed from Hartford-Brainard Airport when their airplane hit a utility pole and burst into flames.

Citing an anonymous law enforcement officer, the LA Times reported that at some point, student pilot Freitekh refused to fly the plane any longer. Some officers dismissed the theory that it was a terrorist attack, calling the crash a suicide attempt, the Associated Press reports.

Flight instructor Prevala survived the crash and was taken to Bridgeport Hospital to be treated for serious burns. However, Freitekh died in the crash. Two people were also hospitalized over minor burns after their minivan nearly collided with the falling plane.

Governor Dannel P. Malloy (D) urged the media not to jump to conclusions, dismissing the theory that it was a terrorist attack. "When events such as this occur, we recognize that people almost automatically wonder if someone meant to do us harm. But we must exercise caution about jumping to conclusions before discovering and considering all of the facts," the Governor told the Press on Wednesday.

According to public records, Freitekh, 28, lived in Orland Hills, but was born in Jordan. Federal Aviation Administration records show that he had a Private Pilot License (PPL) to fly a single-engine plane. The two piston engine aircraft was the next step in training for a Commercial Pilot License (CPL), a certificate that allows pilots to fly commercial planes.

Getting a CPL license is a hard and expensive process, and the fact that Freitekh rented an apartment in Hartford near the flight school, showed his determination to finish the school. Neighbors, who described him as "very nice, polite, always smiling" told reporters that Freitekh had lived there for five months. Police and FBI searched the apartment, finding nothing suspicious.

Freitekh was full of life and not religious at all, his family claims. He chased his dream of becoming a commercial pilot, they say.

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