

Solar Impulse plane postpones Ohio departure (Update)

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Solar Impulse 2 workers tow the experimental solar-powered aircraft to the runway in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on May 21, 2016

A solar-powered plane set to fly from Ohio to Pennsylvania on Tuesday delayed its departure to inspect possible damage due to a mishap, organizers said.

The Solar Impulse 2, set to be piloted by Swiss national Bertrand

Piccard, was scheduled to fly out of Dayton International Airport and head to Lehigh Valley International Airport near the city of Allentown at 1000 GMT.

However problems arose with the fan needed to keep the giant plane's mobile hanger inflated, and while rebooting the system, "some parts of the airplane were lightly touched by the deflating hangar fabric," organizers said in a statement.

The slow-moving, single-seat plane with the wingspan of a Boeing 747, contains 17,000 solar cells that power the aircraft's propellers and charge batteries. The panels provide the plane's sole source of energy for the flight.

At first check engineers found no damage.

"However this will have to be studied more carefully over the next few days and as such the flight from Dayton to Lehigh Valley has to be postponed," the statement said.

No rescheduled departure time or date was announced.

The Solar Impulse 2 has traversed much of the globe in stages since taking off March 9, 2015 from Abu Dhabi.

The project aims to promote renewable energy.

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