



AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

				Ref No.	CA18/2/3/9388	
Aircraft Registration	OM8118	Date of Accident	16 December 2014		Time of Accident	1515Z
Type of Aircraft	Discus 2CT Glider (Sailplane)		Type of Operation		Private	
Pilot-in-command Licence Type		Gliding licence	Age	41	Licence Valid	Yes
Pilot-in-command Flying Experience		Total Flying Hours	790		Hours on Type	37
Last point of departure		Douglas private aerodrome in Kimberley: Northern Cape				
Next point of intended landing		Douglas private aerodrome in Kimberley: Northern Cape				
Location of the accident site with reference to easily defined geographical points (GPS readings if possible)						
Gravel road.						
Meteorological Information		Wind direction, easterly: Visibility, 10 km: Temperature, 20°C: Wind speed, 3 knots.				
Number of people on board		1 + 0	No. of people injured	0	No. of people killed	0
Synopsis						
<p>On the afternoon of Tuesday 16 December 2014, a certified glider pilot from the Czech Republic was conducting a cross country gliding flight from Douglas aerodrome in Kimberley when the mishap occurred. According to the pilot, the aircraft was successfully towed to the required flight level, where it was duly released. All was in order and the weather condition was favourable at the departure aerodrome. After approximately seven hours into the flight, and while the aircraft was being navigated over Postmansburg at 12 000 ft AMSL the aircraft became aerodynamically ineffective. The aircraft could not maintain altitude and the pilot opted to make a forced landing, approximately 75 nautical miles (NM) west of the aerodrome. The pilot took firm control of the aircraft and landed on a public gravel road. However, during the landing process the left wing collided with a road information sign board next to the road. The aircraft's left wing was damaged but no injuries were reported. Post examination of the aircraft showed no signs of anomalies. The investigation revealed that the mishap was as a result of lack thermal activity on the aircraft flight path.</p>						
Probable Cause						
<p>Unsuccessful forced landing as a result of loss of thermal in flight.</p> <p>Contributing factor/s:</p> <p>Collision with an obstacle during a forced landing.</p>						
IARC Date				Release Date		

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT

Name of Owner/Operator : Michael Fick
Manufacturer : Schempp Hirth
Model : Glider
Nationality : Czech Republic
Registration Marks : OM8118
Place : Postmansburg
Date : 16 December 2014
Time : 1515Z

All times given in this report are Co-ordinated Universal Time (UTC) and will be denoted by (Z). South African Standard Time is UTC plus 2 hours.

Purpose of the Investigation:

*In terms of Regulation 12.03.1 of the Civil Aviation Regulations (1997) this report was compiled in the interests of the promotion of aviation safety and the reduction of the risk of aviation accidents or incidents and **not to establish legal liability**.*

Disclaimer:

This report is produce without prejudice to the rights of the CAA, which are reserved.

1. FACTUAL INFORMATION

1.1 History of Flight:

1.1.1 On Tuesday 16 December 2014, the pilot, being the sole occupant on-board of a non-powered glider aircraft was conducting a cross country gliding flight from Douglas private aerodrome in Kimberley when the mishap happened. Visual meteorological conditions (VMC) prevailed during departure and no flight plan was filed. The pilot with other crewmembers made sure that the glider was correctly rigged before launching. The glider was then towed to the launching area for the final preparation for the flight. The glider pilot ensured that the launch crewmember was aware of safety procedures and boarded the glider. The launch crewmembers or wing runner applies tension to the towline and signaled the glider pilot to activate the release.

- 1.1.2 The launch crewmember verified that the release operated properly and signaled the glider pilot accordingly. When the glider pilot signaled “ready for take-off,” the launch crewmember cleared both the take-off and landing area, and then signaled the tow pilot “rated” to take up slack in the towline. Once the slack was out of the towline, the launch crewmember again verified that the glider pilot was ready for take-off. The crewmember completed a final traffic pattern check, and then raised the wings to a level position. With the wings raised, the wing runner then signaled the tow pilot for take-off. At the same time, the glider pilot signaled the tow pilot by wagging or shaking the rudder back and forth, concurring with the launch wing runner take off signal. The launch began into the wind and the glider accelerated. The launch wing runner ran alongside the glider, holding the wing level. The glider attained lift off speed and the glider pilot allowed the glider to become just barely airborne and leveled behind the tow aircraft’s tail, as it accelerated to climb speed.
- 1.1.3 The tow aircraft also lifted off, and accelerated to the desired climb airspeed. The two aircraft climbed uneventfully and reached the release position. The pilot of the tow aircraft cleared the area for other aircraft in all directions prior to releasing the glider. The glider pilot pulled the release handle completely out to ensure that the towline hook was fully open and then released the tow-line. The glider pilot allowed the release of the towline and held the hook release open until it was verified that the towline was free of the glider. The glider pilot reported that after about seven hours flight hours, into the flight and while the aircraft was routing back to the aerodrome it all of a sudden became aerodynamically ineffective. This occurred over Postmansburg at 12 000 ft AMSL. The glider could not maintain altitude and so the pilot initiated a forced landing, which was approximately 75 nautical miles (NM) west of Douglas aerodrome. The pilot took firm control of the glider and landed on a public gravel road. However during the process the left wing collided with a road information sign board at the side of the road. The left wing was damaged but the pilot was not injured. The accident happened during day light conditions.

1.2 Injuries to Persons:

Injuries	Pilot	Crew	Pass.	Other
Fatal	-	-	-	-
Serious	-	-	-	-

Minor	-	-	-	-
None	1	-	-	-

1.3 Damage to Aircraft:

1.3.1 Damage was limited to left wing of the glider.



Figure 1: The final position of the glider after collision with the information sign

1.4 Other Damage:

1.4.1 Apart from the road information sign, no other damage was caused.

1.5 Personnel Information:

1.5.1 Pilot-in-command:

Nationality	Czech Republic	Gender	Male	Age	41
-------------	----------------	--------	------	-----	----

Licence Type	Private	Licence Type	Glider licence
Licence valid	Yes	Type Endorsed	Yes
Ratings	Flight Instructor		
Medical Expiry Date	Unknown		
Restrictions	None		
Previous Accidents	None		

Flying Experience:

Total Hours	790
Total Past 90 Days	37
Total on Type Past 90 Days	37
Total on Type	37

*NOTE: The pilot was a Czech Republic national and was in possession of a valid gliding licence from his home country.

1.6 Aircraft Information:

1.6.1 Aircraft description:

A Discus 2 is a standard class sailplane produced by Schempp Hirth.

Type	Discus 2 CT Glider
Serial Number	68
Manufacturer	Schempp Hirth
Year of Manufacture	Unknown

Total Airframe Hours (At time of Accident)	1 911	
Last Annual (Hours & Date)	1 904	2 April 2014
Hours since Last Annual	7	
Authority to Fly (Issue Date)	2 April 2014	
C of R (Issue Date) (Present owner)	Unknown	
Operating Categories	Standard	

1.7 Meteorological Information:

- 1.7.1 An official weather report was obtained from the South African Weather Services following the accident.

Weather conditions at the time of the accident:

A satellite image in figure 2 below shows that Postmansburg was covered in mid-level altocumulus clouds with possible towering cumulus development occurring in the area.

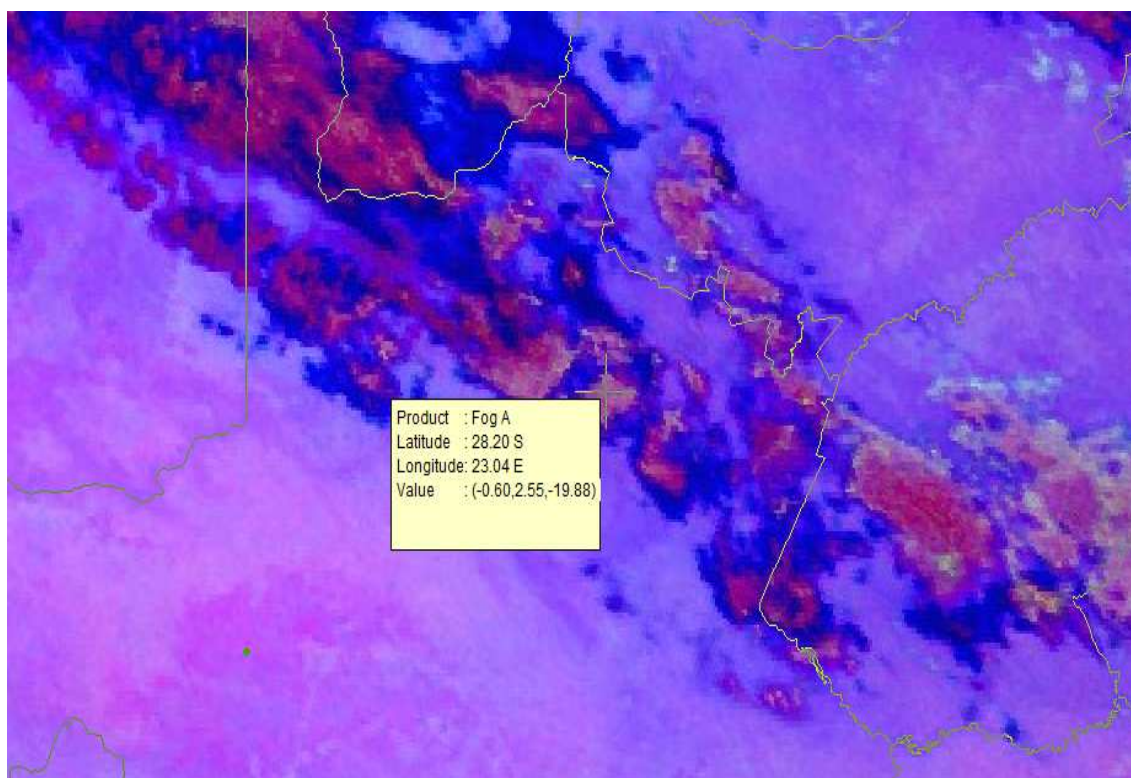


Figure 2: Satallite image taken on 16 December 2014

The most probable weather condition at the time of the accident were:

Wind direction - Easterly

Visibility - 10 km

Temperature - 20°C

Wind speed - 3 knots.

1.8 Aids to Navigation:

1.8.1 The aircraft was equipped with standard navigation equipment. All navigation equipment's was serviceable at the time of the accident.

1.9 Communications:

1.9.1 The communication equipment was installed in the aircraft was found to comply with the approved equipment list. There were no defects reported with the communication equipment prior to the accident.

1.10 Aerodrome Information:

1.10.1 The accident did not happen at the aerodrome.

1.11 Flight Recorders:

1.11.1 The aircraft was not fitted with a Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) or a Flight Data Recorder (FDR) and neither was it required by regulation to be fitted to this type.

1.12 Wreckage and Impact Information:

1.12.1 During the forced landing, the aircraft collided with an information bill board next to a gravel road. The amount of damage was limited to the aircraft's left hand side wing and the information sign board. Apart from that, everything else was found to

be in good order and in working condition. The aircraft came to rest on the left hand side of the road. Figure 3 and 4 are photographs of the aircraft taken after the accident.



Figure 3: The aircraft as found at the accident side after the accident



Figure 4: Damaged left hand side wing

1.13 Medical and Pathological Information:

1.13.1 Not applicable.

1.14 Fire:

1.14.1 There was no pre- or post-impact fire.

1.15 Survival Aspects:

1.15.1 The accident was regarded as survivable due to the fact that the cockpit was not affected or rather damaged during the accident sequence.

1.16 Tests and Research:

1.16.1 None.

1.17 Organisational and Management Information:

1.17.1 This was a private flight.

1.17.2 The last annual inspection prior to the accident was certified by AMO (Aircraft Maintenance Organisation) based in the Czech Republic known as Aero-spool.

1.18 Additional Information:

1.18.1 None.

1.19 Useful or Effective Investigation Techniques:

1.19.1 None.

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 According to the pilot's report, the prevailing weather conditions during take-off were fine. The intended flight was from Douglas private aerodrome in Kimberley, and there was nothing unusual about this operation. The pilot was properly licenced and rated on the aircraft type. The pilot reported that while he was manoeuvring the aircraft at 12 000 ft AMSL towards Douglas aerodrome, it all of a sudden became aerodynamically ineffective. As a result, the aircraft could not maintain altitude and so the pilot had no option but to perform a forced landing on a gravel road chosen. During the landing process the aircraft's left wing collided with an information sign board on the left hand side of the gravel road. The investigation revealed that the mishap was the result of lack of thermal activity on the aircraft's flight path.

3. CONCLUSION:

3.1 Findings:

- 3.1.1 The pilot held a valid gliding licence and had the aircraft type endorsed in his logbook.
- 3.1.2 The pilot's medical certificate was valid with no restrictions.
- 3.1.3 The flight was operated as a general aviation flight under VFR rules.
- 3.1.4 The aircraft was in possession of a valid authority to fly at the time of the accident.
- 3.1.5 The mishap arose as a result of storms in the area.
- 3.1.6 The accident was considered survivable.

3.2 Probable Cause/s:

- 3.2.1 Unsuccessful forced landing as a result of loss of thermal in flight.

3.3 Contributory factor/s:

- 3.3.1 Collision with an obstacle during landing.

4. SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS:

4.1 None.

5. APPENDICES:

5.1 None.