

LIMITED OCCURRENCE INVESTIGATION REPORT – FINAL

Reference Number	CA18/2/3/10455						
Classification	Accident	Date	29 April 2024		Time	0915Z	
Type of Operation	Private (Part 94)						
Location							
Place of Departure	Groutville Airfield near Ballito, KwaZulu-Natal Province		Place of Intended Landing		Vryheid Airfield (FAVY), KwaZulu-Natal Province		
Place of Occurrence	Runway 19 at Vryheid Airfield (FAVY), KwaZulu-Natal Province						
GPS Co-ordinates	Latitude	27°47'13.01" S	Longitude	30°48'01.69" E	Elevation	3 800ft	
Aircraft Information							
Registration	ZU-ITV						
Make; Model; S/N	SkyReach Aircraft; Cheetah XLS Bushcat (Serial Number: CH-163C)						
Damage to Aircraft	Minor		Total Airframe Hours		112.8		
Pilot-in-command							
Licence Type	Private Pilot Licence (PPL)		Gender	Male		Age	53
Licence Valid	Yes	Total Hours	236.4		Total Hours on Type	52.5	
Total Hours 30 Days	15.4		Total Flying Hours on Type Past 90 Days		15.4		
People On-board	1 + 0	Injuries	0	Fatalities	0	Other (On the ground)	0
What Happened							
<p>On Monday morning, 29 April 2024, a pilot on-board a Cheetah XLS Bushcat taildragger aircraft with registration ZU-ITV was on a private flight from Groutville Airfield near Ballito in KwaZulu-Natal province to Vryheid Airfield (FAVY) in the same province. Visual meteorological conditions (VMC) by day prevailed at the time of the flight which was conducted under the provisions of Part 94 of the Civil Aviation Regulations (CAR) 2011 as amended.</p> <p>The pilot reported that before the flight, he performed a pre-flight inspection of the aircraft and nothing abnormal was found. The aircraft had 95 litres (l) of Avgas 100 LL in the tanks. After the engine start, he taxied the aircraft to the runway threshold and performed the pre-take-off checks. Once satisfied at around 0727Z, the pilot advanced the throttle lever to 5 800 revolutions per minute (RPM) and commenced with the take-off run. After the aircraft had climbed to 7 500 feet (ft), he retarded the throttle lever to 5 000 RPM, cruising at a speed to 80 knots. The segments of the flight to FAVY were uneventful. Upon arrival, the pilot noticed that there was a slight right crosswind on the grass-covered Runway 19, indicated by the windsock. The crosswind was perceived by the pilot to be within the limits of the aircraft.</p>							

The pilot selected two notches of flaps in preparation for landing on Runway 19 which was 944 metres (m) in length. According to the pilot, the approach was stable. After touchdown, the aircraft veered off to the left. The pilot applied right rudder to maintain heading, but the aircraft continued to drift to the left and came to a halt outside the demarcated landing area. The pilot switched off the master and disembarked from the aircraft; he was unharmed. Post-accident examination of the aircraft indicated a bent spring aluminium on the left main gear strut. The main landing gear tyres showed no signs of flat spots.



Figure 1: The aircraft at the accident site with a bent left main gear strut. (Source: Pilot)

Meteorological Information

The meteorological aerodrome report (METAR) for FAVY on 29 April 2024 at 0900Z was obtained from the South African Weather Service (SAWS) aviation website: www.aviation.weathersa.co.za. The nearest weather station to the accident site is Greytown Aerodrome (FAGY).

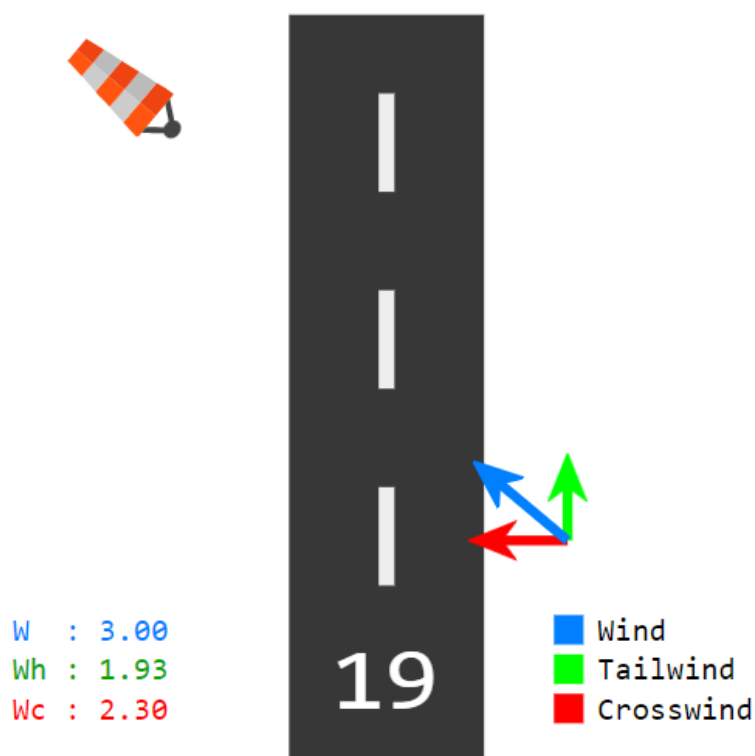
290900Z AUTO 32003KT //// // ///// 24/12 Q1020=

Wind Direction	320°	Wind Speed	3 knots	Visibility	9999 m
Temperature	24°C	Cloud Cover	Nil	Cloud Base	CAVOK
Dew Point	12°C	QNH	1020hPa		

Crosswind Component

(Source: e6bx.com/wind-components/)

The crosswind component at the time of the flight was calculated to be 3 knots from the right. A Cheetah XLS Bushcat aircraft has a maximum crosswind velocity of 32 miles per hour (mph) (27 knots) demonstrated at full flap setting. There should be no challenge maintaining the runway centreline during the 3 knots crosswind condition.



Aerodrome

FAVY is a small unlicensed aerodrome in KwaZulu-Natal province with two runways. The first runway is asphalt-covered and is orientated 11/29; it is 1 242 metres (m) long and 13m wide. The second runway is grass-covered and is orientated 01/19; it is 944m long and 45m wide.

Findings

1. Personnel Information

- 1.1 The pilot had a Private Pilot Licence (PPL) that was initially issued on 2 May 2023. The licence was reissued on 1 February 2023 with an expiry date of 31 January 2025. The pilot had flown a total of 236.4 hours of which 52.5 hours were on the aircraft type. The pilot had the aircraft type endorsed on his licence.

1.2 The pilot had a Class 2 aviation medical certificate that was issued on 21 November 2023 with an expiry date of 30 November 2024. The pilot had a restriction to wear suitable corrective lenses whilst flying an aircraft.

2. Aircraft Information

2.1 The last inspection that was conducted on the aircraft before the accident flight was certified on 23 August 2023 at 82.5 total airframe hours. The accident occurred at 112.8 airframe hours, which meant that the aircraft had accrued 30.3 hours since the last inspection.

2.2 The aircraft was issued a Certificate of Release to Service (CRS) on 23 August 2023 with an expiry date of 31 August 2024 or at 182.5 airframe hours, whichever occurs first.

2.3 The aircraft's Certificate of Registration (C of R) was issued to the present owner on 22 February 2021.

2.4 The aircraft had a valid Authority to Fly (ATF) Certificate that was issued by the Regulator (SACAA) on 4 September 2023 with an expiry date of 29 August 2024. The aircraft was airworthy when it was dispatched for the flight.

Probable Cause

It is possible that the aircraft was unstable during approach, and it touched down hard with the left main wheel first; consequently, the left main gear strut bent.

Contributing Factors

None.

Safety Action

None.

Safety Message

None.

About this Report

The decision to conduct a limited investigation is based on factors including whether the cause is known and the evidence supporting the cause is clear, the level of safety benefit likely to be obtained from an investigation, and that will determine the scope of an investigation. For this occurrence, a limited investigation has been conducted, and the Accident and Incident Investigations Division (AIID) has relied on the information submitted by the affected person/s and organisation/s to compile this limited report. The report has been compiled using information supplied in the initial notification, as well as from follow-up desktop inquiries to bring awareness of potential safety issues to the industry in respect of this occurrence, as well as possible safety action/s that the industry might want to consider in preventing a recurrence of a similar occurrence.

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

In terms of Regulation 12.03.1 of the Civil Aviation Regulations (CAR) 2011 and ICAO Annex 13, this report was compiled in the interest of the promotion of aviation safety and the reduction of the risk of aviation accidents or incidents and not apportion blame or liability.

Disclaimer

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**This report is issued by:
Accident and Incident Investigations Division
South African Civil Aviation Authority
Republic of South Africa**