



LIMITED OCCURRENCE INVESTIGATION REPORT – FINAL

Reference Number	CA18/3/2/1529						
Classification	Serious Incident	Date	8 February 2026		Time	0505Z	
Type of Operation	Commercial Operation of Non-type Certified Aircraft (Part 96)						
Location							
Place of Departure	Ballito Aerodrome, KwaZulu-Natal Province		Place of Intended Landing	Ballito Aerodrome, KwaZulu-Natal Province			
Place of Occurrence	Apron at Ballito Aerodrome						
GPS Co-ordinates	Latitude	29°29'25.85" S	Longitude	031°10'38.26" E	Elevation	220 feet	
Aircraft Information							
Registration	ZU-BBN						
Make; Model; S/N	Solo Wings; Windlass Aquilla (Serial Number: WA 560468)						
Damage to Aircraft	Substantial		Total Aircraft Hours	490.9			
Pilot-in-command							
Licence Type	National Pilot Licence		Gender	Male		Age	51
Licence Valid	Yes	Total Hours	547.0		Total Hours on Type	404.4	
Total Hours 30 Days	8.1		Total Flying on Type Past 90 Days	13.8			
People On-board	1 + 1	Injuries	0	Fatalities	0	Other (on ground)	0
What Happened							
<p>On Sunday, 8 February 2026 at approximately 0505Z, a pilot and a passenger on-board a microlight registered ZU-BBN were about to conduct a scenic flight from Ballito Aerodrome in KwaZulu-Natal province with the intention to land back at the same aerodrome when the serious incident occurred. The flight was intended to be conducted under visual meteorological conditions (VMC) by day and under the provisions of Part 96 of the Civil Aviation Regulations (CAR) 2011, as amended.</p> <p>The pilot stated that he assisted the passenger into the rear seat and gave him a safety briefing in accordance with the standard operating procedures (SOP's) whilst the microlight was still parked. The microlight was fitted with dual flight controls. The passenger did not take heed of the briefing regarding the rear throttle control and had his feet resting on the throttle control lever. Upon starting the engine, the passenger's foot was pressing down on the rear throttle control, and the microlight accelerated. The pilot applied the brakes and tried to switch off the magnetos, but the microlight aircraft was already moving forward, and it impacted another stationary microlight with registration ZU-BUI, which sustained cosmetic damage (see Figure 4).</p> <p>No person was injured during the serious incident sequence. The microlight (ZU-BBN) sustained a singular broken propeller blade, bent keel tube and bent drag link.</p>							



Figure 1: An aerial view of Ballito Aerodrome and the serious incident site. (Source: Google Earth)



Figure 2: A singular broken propeller blade. (Source: Pilot)



Figure 3: The bent keel tube. (Source: Pilot)



Figure 4: The leading-edge canvas covering of the ZU-BUI showing sustained damage.
(Source: Pilot)

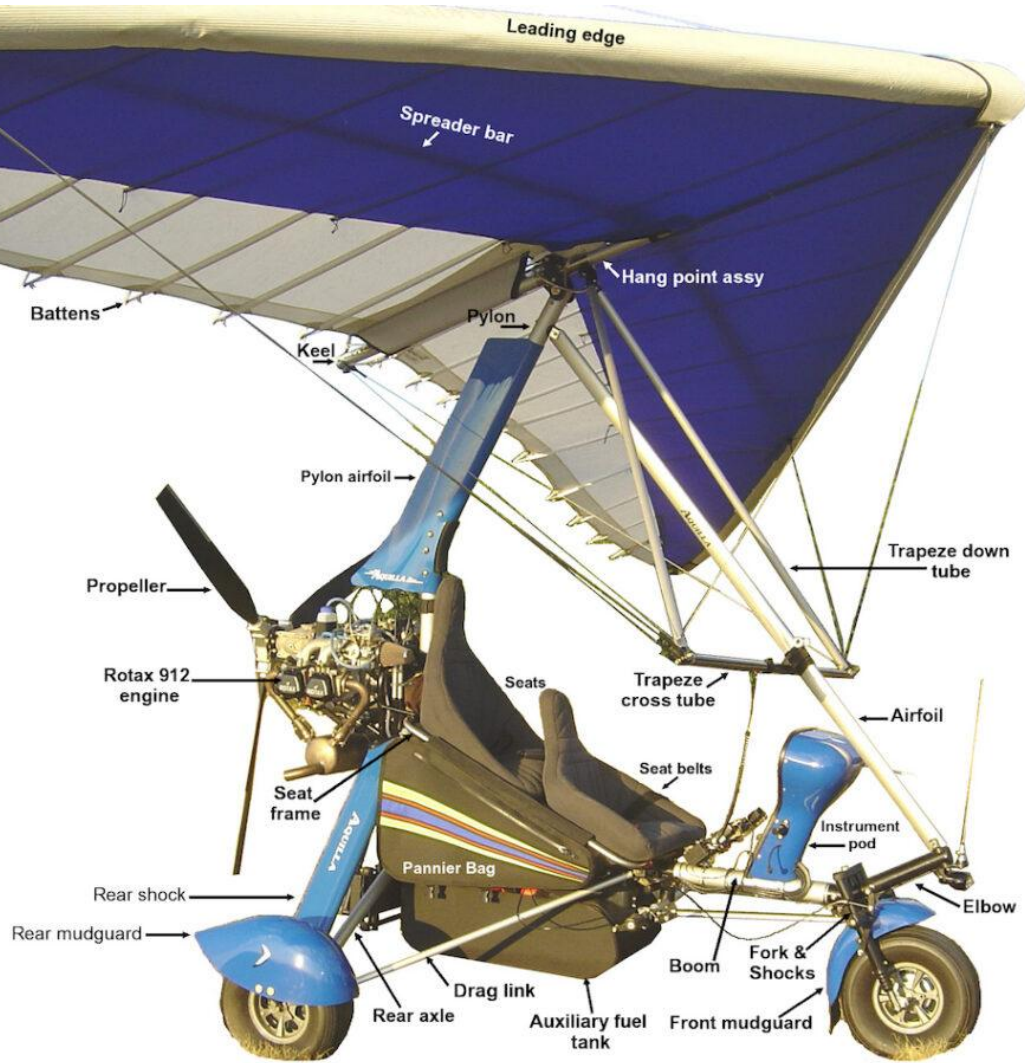


Diagram 1: The basic layout of the Windlass Aquilla.
 (Source: <https://solowings.co.za/aquilla-912-ul-uls/>)

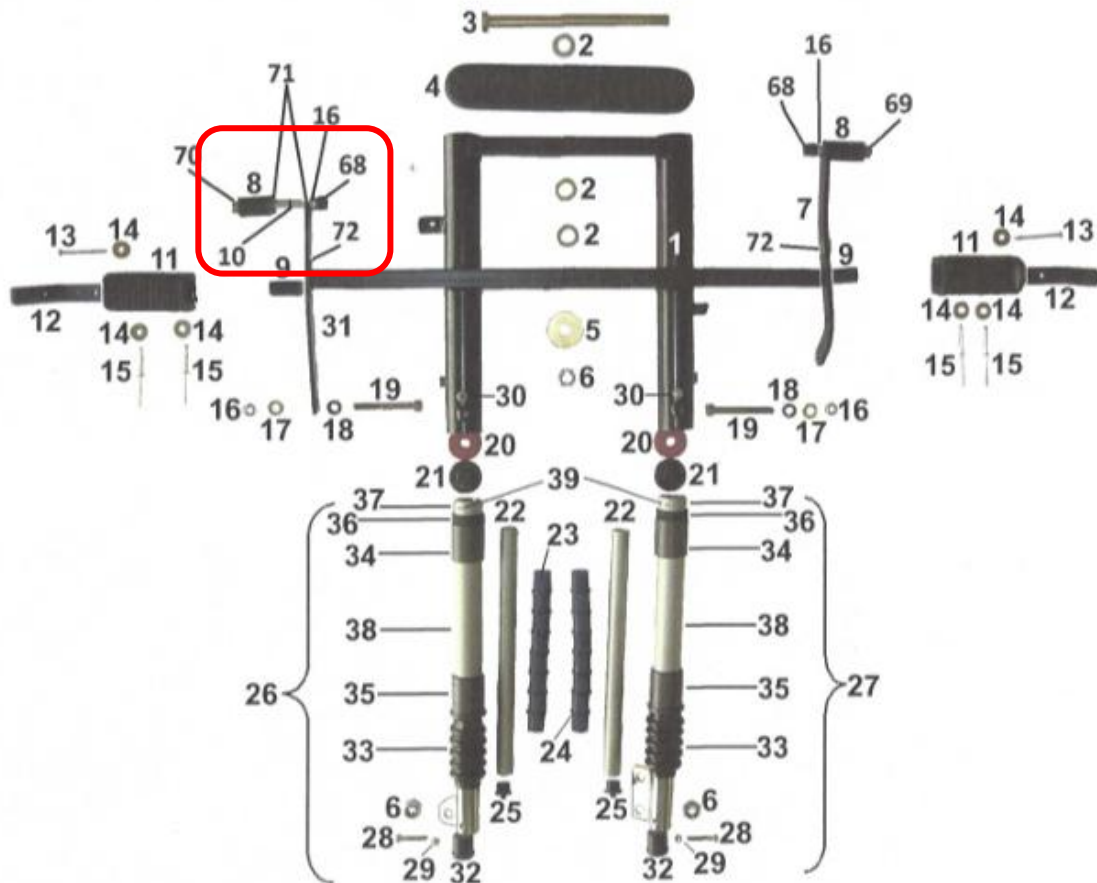


Diagram 2: The front-end fork assembly, indicating the pilot's foot throttle lever, item 10.

(Source: <https://solowings.co.za/#parts>)

Findings

1. Personnel

- 1.1 The pilot had a National Pilot Licence (NPL) that was initially issued by the Regulator (SACAA) on 28 February 2013. His licence was renewed on 23 October 2025 and was valid until 7 October 2027.
- 1.2 The pilot was issued a Class 2 aviation medical certificate on 20 November 2023 with an expiry date of 30 July 2026. The pilot had the following restriction endorsed in his medical licence: *Valid only with correction for defective distant vision (VDL). Pilot must carry a spare pair of lenses when flying (SSL).*

2. Aircraft

- 2.1 The microlight was manufactured in 1996. The last annual inspection of the microlight was certified on 26 January 2026 at 488.7 total airframe hours. The microlight had accrued 2.2 hours since the said annual inspection.
- 2.2 The microlight was initially issued an Authority-to-Fly (ATF) Certificate on 9 November 2019 with an expiry date of 26 February 2026.
- 2.3 A Certificate of Registration (C of R) was issued to the present owner on 18 March 2025.
- 2.4 A Certificate of Release to Service (CSR) was issued on 26 January 2026 with an expiry date of 25 January 2027 or at 588.7 airframe hours, whichever occurs first.

3. Operator

- 3.1 The operator was issued an Air Operating Certificate under the provisions of Part 96 of the Civil Aviation Regulations 2011 on 1 December 2025 with an expiry date of 30 November 2026.
- 3.2 As this was a commercial operation (paid for scenic flight), the passenger had completed an indemnity form before the flight.
- 3.3 The passenger was given a safety briefing before the flight as per the standard operating procedures.
- 3.4 The passenger provided a statement confirming that his foot was on the throttle during start-up.
- 3.5 The ZS-BBN was parked on the flight line facing ZU-BUI which meant that the pilot did not consider a safe proximity to other aircraft.

Probable Cause

Ground impact occurred when the passenger rested his foot on the aft throttle lever at the time the pilot started the engine. This caused the microlight to accelerate forward and impact another parked, unoccupied microlight.

Contributing Factors

1. The ZS-BBN was parked on the flight line facing ZU-BUI, which should be regarded as a significant contributory factor to the serious incident because it jeopardised safety of other aircraft.

2.	The microlight was equipped with dual flight controls which should be regarded as a significant contributing factor to this serious incident.
3.	The passenger interfered with the duties of the pilot by resting his foot on the aft throttle lever, even though he received a safety briefing before the flight.
Safety Action(s)	
None.	
Safety Message and/or Safety Recommendations	
1.	It is recommended to the operator that if they continue to conduct commercial flights with microlight fitted with dual controls, the pilot should conduct a physical check before starting the engine to ensure that the passengers' feet are clear of the aft throttle lever. The pilot should continue to observe the position of the passengers' feet during the flight; in addition, this should be repeated before touchdown.
2.	It is recommended that the operator ensures proper flight line safety is complied with by parking the microlight away from direct line with other aircraft to mitigate the risk of a ground impact as well as ensure that aircraft safety is not compromised.
About this Report	
<p><i>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 desk top enquiries 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.</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	
Purpose	
<p><i>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 promoting aviation safety and reducing the risk of aviation accidents or incidents, and not to apportion blame or liability.</i></p>	
Disclaimer	
<p><i>This report is produced without prejudice to the rights of the AIID, which are reserved.</i></p>	

This report is issued by:

**Accident and Incident Investigations Division
South African Civil Aviation Authority
Republic of South Africa**