

INTERIM STATEMENT

Accident and Incident Investigations Division

Accident
- ZU-IMP Interim Statement -
AIID Ref No: CA18/2/3/10568



Figure 1: The file picture of the ZU-IMP Aermacchi MB-326 Impala MK1. (Source: www.planespotters.net)

Description:

On 22 March 2025, a pilot on-board an Aermacchi MB-326 Impala Mk 1 aircraft, registration ZU-IMP, was engaged in an aerobatic display at the West Coast Airshow in Saldanha/Vredenburg Aerodrome (FASD), Western Cape province, with the intention to land at the same aerodrome. The aircraft took off and entered the aerobatic box; during the execution of an aileron roll with the landing gear and flaps extended to demonstrate the aircraft's capabilities, its nose pitched down towards the ground and the aircraft crashed, followed by a post-impact fire.

Eyewitnesses reported hearing the engine spool down at the top of the roll. By the time the aircraft rotated to the level-wing position, it had lost significant altitude. At this point, the engine spooled up and the right wing dropped and struck the ground. A post-impact fire erupted soon after. The aircraft was destroyed by impact forces and the fire that ensued. The FASD Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) team as well as the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) had swiftly responded to the scene.

The pilot was fatally injured, and the aircraft was destroyed.

DESCRIPTION OF OCCURRENCE

Occurrence Reference	: CA18/2/3/10568
Occurrence Category	: Accident (Category 1)
Name of the Operator	: Sakoi
Manufacturer	: Aermacchi SPA
Aircraft Model	: Impala MK1
Engines	: 1
Nationality	: South African
Registration	: ZU-IMP
Manufacture Serial Number	: 479
Date of Manufacture	: 1964
Flight Hours/Cycles	: 3 515.1
Type of Flight	: Private (Part 94)
State of Occurrence	: South Africa
Place of Occurrence	: Saldanha/Vredenburg Aerodrome
Date and Time	: 22 March 2025 at 1300Z
Total Crewmembers	: 1
Total Passengers	: 0
Injuries to Passengers and Crew	: 1 fatal (pilot)
Other Injuries	: None
Nature of Damage	: Destroyed

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 (CAR) 2011 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 to apportion blame or liability.***

This interim statement is released in accordance with Standard 6.6 of the International Civil Aviation Authority (ICAO) Annex 13 and the CAR Part 12.05.1(7). Later, a final report may contain altered information in case new evidence becomes available during the on-going investigation.

Any person who has information concerning this accident should contact the AIID on AIIDinbox@caa.co.za

Investigations process:

This occurrence was categorised as an accident, and the Accident and Incident Investigations Division (AIID) had assigned file number CA18/2/3/10568 for this investigation.

The AIID investigation team comprises the investigator-in-charge (IIC) and members from the AIID team who have relevant investigating capabilities regarding this accident. The AIID had sent notifications to the States of Manufacturer, and Operator and Design. The States did not assign accredited representatives. Moreover, the operator did not assign an advisor to the IIC. The AIID is leading the investigation and will issue the final report.

The AIID reports are made available to the public at:

<https://www.caa.co.za/industry-information/accidents-and-incidents/>

Disclaimer:

This interim statement is produced without prejudice to the rights of the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA), which are reserved.

Interim Statement

A post-mortem report was received by the IIC and is in the process of being analysed, with the assistance of a medical specialist, to draw a factual conclusion which will be presented in the final report. This process is expected to be completed within the next six months.

This report is issued by:

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