

PRELIMINARY AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT

Accident and Incident Investigations Division

Paraglider Accident
- Preliminary Report -
AIID Ref No: CA18/2/3/10620



Figure 1: A file picture of an inflated Moustache 13 paraglider. (Source: go-flare.com)

Description:

On Tuesday afternoon, 25 November 2025, a pilot and two other colleagues launched their paragliders on foot from Lion's Head Mountain in Cape Town, Western Cape province. The pilot intended to land at Clifton Beach, situated 1148 feet (ft) below the launch spot.

Details about the preparation and departure of the subject paraglider are not known; however, a closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera footage which was made available to the investigators showed three paragliders flying in a loose formation. Two witnesses (hikers) who were near the accident site stated that they heard what sounded like a shoot scraping against the mountain surface; when they looked up, they saw a blue-green and white (turquoise) shoot tumbling down from above

and impacted the ground. The hikers stated that the time on their cellular phone was 1648Z when they started to make calls to the paramedics for assistance. According to the hikers, the first responders arrived at the accident site at approximately 1800Z; the pilot succumbed to his injuries.

Occurrence Details

Reference Number	: CA18/2/3/10620
Operation	: Part 94 (Private)
Occurrence Category	: Accident (Category 1)
Manufacturer	: Flare Parakite
Model	: Moustache 13
Place	: Lion's Head Mountain, Cape Town, Western Cape
Date and Time	: 25 November 2025 at 1648Z
Injuries	: 1 fatal
Damage	: Minor

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.

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.

Investigation Process

The Accident and Incident Investigations Division (AIID) was notified of the occurrence involving a paraglider which occurred at Lion's Head Mountain, Western Cape province, on 25 November 2025 at 1648Z. The occurrence was classified as an accident according to Part 12 of the CAR 2011.

The AIID has appointed an investigator-in-charge (IIC) to conduct the investigation. The IIC will be assisted by an expert from the South African Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association (SAHPA). The IIC was dispatched to the site. The AIID will lead the investigation and issue the final report of this accident in accordance with the CAR 2011 Part 12.

The information contained in this preliminary report is derived from the information gathered during the on-going investigation into the occurrence. Later, an interim or final report may contain altered information in case new evidence is found during the on-going investigation that requires changes to the information depicted in this report.

The AIID reports are made available to the public at:

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

Notes:

- Whenever the following words are mentioned in this report, they shall mean the following:*
Accident — this investigated accident
Flare Parakite — Moustache 13 involved in this accident
Investigation — the investigation into the circumstances of this accident
Pilot — the pilot involved in this accident
Report — this accident report
- Photos and figures used in this report were taken from different sources and may have been adjusted from the original for the sole purpose of improving clarity of the report. Modifications to images used in this report were limited to cropping, magnification, file compression; or enhancement of colour, brightness, contrast; or addition of text boxes, arrows, or lines.*

Disclaimer

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

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Abbreviation	Description
°	Degrees
°C	Degrees Celsius
AIID	Accident and Incident Investigations Division
CAR	Civil Aviation Regulations
C of R	Certificate of Registration
CRS	Certificate of Release to Service
FACT	Cape Town International Airport
ft	Feet
hPa	Hectopascal
kt	Knots
m	Metres
METAR	Meteorological Aerodrome Report
VFR	Visual Flight Rules
SACAA	South African Civil Aviation Authority
SAHPA	South African Hang-Gliding Association
SANparks	South African National Parks
SAWS	South African Weather Service
QNH	Altitude Above Mean Sea Level
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
Z	Zulu (Term for Universal Co-ordinated Time - Zero Hours Greenwich)

1. FACTUAL INFORMATION

1.1. History of Flight

- 1.1.1. On Tuesday afternoon, 25 November 2025, a pilot and two other paragliding colleagues launched their paragliders on foot from Lion's Head in Cape Town, Western Cape province. The pilot intended to land at Clifton Beach, situated 1148 feet (ft) below the launch spot. The flight was conducted under visual flight rules (VFR) by day and under the provisions of Part 94 of the Civil Aviation Regulations (CAR) 2011, as amended.
- 1.1.2. Details about the preparation and departure of the subject paraglider are not known; however, a closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera footage was made available to the investigators. The footage showed three paragliders flying in a loose formation after launch. *Figure 2 depicts the turquoise (blue-green) and white Moustache 13, which was the accident paraglider, as well as the other two paragliders after the launch.* Figure 2 image was taken at 1615Z, about 32 minutes before the accident paraglider was located at the accident site.

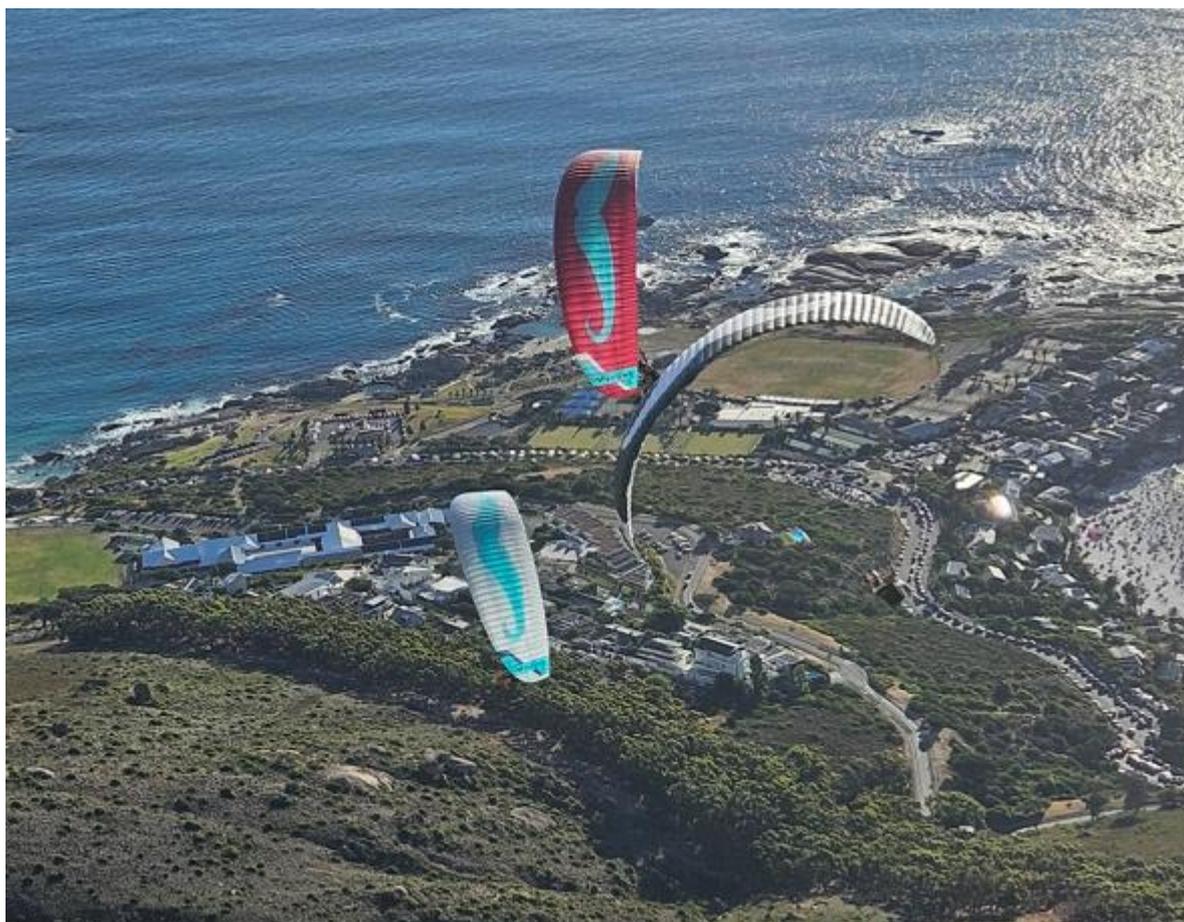


Figure 2: A still image of the three paragliders before the accident. (Source: SAHPA)

1.1.3. Two hikers who were near the accident site stated: “At approximately 18:45 (local time), above and ahead of us, we heard what sounded like a shoot scraping [against] the mountain [surface]. [We] looked up and saw the blue and white paraglider tumbling in the air. The parachute was not inflated and the paraglider [crossed the path in front of us [still in the air] at a diagonal angle and [impacted] the ground behind us. He was descending at about a 45-degree angle. I pulled out my phone and I am confident I saw the time as 16:48Z (18:48 local time). My phone does not make outgoing calls in South Africa, so my friend gave me his phone while he went down the mountain to provide help to the injured pilot.”

1.1.4. Another witness stated: “[Whilst] following the pathway with a friend’s friend, from the corner of my eye I saw movement on the pathway level or below; I heard the sound of impact next. The sound can best be described as a solid object hitting a second solid object clean, powerfully.” There were four people at the accident site. The other two paragliders who were flying with the subject pilot were not spotted (seen) by the witnesses and it was not known where they had landed. The four people agreed that they should not move the injured pilot but rather wait for the paramedics. They stated: “There were no visible injuries or bleeding other than the area above his knee (femur).” His slightly damaged helmet was neither removed nor the strap unbuckled. The Insta360 camera fitted to the helmet was missing; it has not been recovered by the investigators at the time of publishing this preliminary report.

1.1.5. The witnesses indicated that they did not ask the pilot too many questions to conserve his energy. They stated: “He said he was in pain and wanted to be moved. He had difficulty explaining the origin of the pain”. According to the witnesses, the first emergency responders arrived at the accident site at approximately 1800Z. The pilot succumbed to his injuries.

1.1.6. The accident occurred during daylight at Global Positioning System (GPS) co-ordinates approximated to be 33°56'6.05" South 18°23'12.51"East, at an elevation of 1294 feet (ft).

1.2. Injuries to Persons

Injuries	Pilot	Pass.	Total On-board
Fatal	1	-	-
Serious	-	-	-
Minor	-	-	-
None	-	-	-
Total	1	-	1

1.2.1. The paraglider pilot succumbed to his injuries after the accident sequence.

1.3. Damage to Paraglider



Figures 3 and 4: The teared harness (blue-green on the inside and black on the outside).

1.3.1. The harness had tearing on the lower region of the right-hand side.

1.4. Other Damage

1.4.1. None.

1.5. Personnel Information

Nationality	South African	Gender	Male	Age	36
Licence Type	National Pilot's Licence (NPL) Paragliding				
Licence Valid	Yes	Type Endorsed	Yes		
Ratings	Paragliding Basic and Sport				
Medical Expiry Date	30 June 2027				
Restrictions	None				
Previous Accidents	To be discussed in the final report				

Note: Previous accidents refer to past accidents the pilot was involved in, when relevant to this accident.

Flying Experience:

Total Hours	378
Total Past 24 Hours	Unknown
Total Past 7 Days	Unknown
Total on Type	275.71

1.5.1. The pilot had a National Pilot Licence in Paragliding that was initially issued on 13 April 2022. The licence was renewed on 27 June 2025 with an expiry date of 30 June 2027.

1.6. Paraglider Information

(Source: <https://go-flare.com>)

The Moustache – compared to its predecessor, is even faster, sharper and more precise. Built for full control in the third dimension, it redefines how you ride the wind. With our proprietary Flare System, you steer your wing with unmatched precision. Adjust glide, lift and speed in real time, right from your hands.

What can you do with it?

Moustache adapts to your flying style. Whether you want to go maximum speed on very low altitude or just chilled soaring sessions.

It is perfect for:

- *Soaring coastal cliffs and dunes*
- *Foot-launch proximity flying*
- *Dynamic terrain runs*
- *Windy-day exploration*
- *Intermediate to advanced pilots levelling up their skill, or special training on the Moustache itself.*

Manufacturer/Model	Flare Parakite / Moustache 13
Serial Number	30627
Year of Manufacture	2025

1.6.1 Harness:

Manufacturer/Model	Flare Contour GFHCO
Serial Number	S001-4621-33377
Year of Manufacture	2022



Figure 5: A harness similar to that worn by the pilot. (Source: <https://go-flare.com>)

1.6.2 Specifications

Easy handling

The Contour eliminates bulky buckles and adjustment straps. The elastic shoulder straps adapt to your size, ensure an optimal fit during the launch phase, and rest comfortably on your shoulders in the air. Red and blue marked seams in the loops improve the overview while small Salewa sling protectors prevent the carabiners from twisting in the straps. In-flight, insulation foam in the complete seat and elastic curved and comfortable tubes on the left and right side of your legs ensure an extremely comfortable fit and counteract the cold.

1.7. Meteorological Information

1.7.1. The weather information below was obtained from the Meteorological Aerodrome Report (METAR) that was issued by the South African Weather Service (SAWS), recorded at Cape Town International Airport (FACT) on 25 November 2025 at 1630Z. The accident site was approximately 10.83 nautical miles (nm) from FACT.

Wind Direction	160°	Wind Speed	11kt	Visibility	9999m
Temperature	29°C	Cloud Cover	Nil	Cloud Base	Nil
Dew Point	08°C	QNH	1011hPa		

1.8. Navigation Information

1.8.1. Not applicable.

1.9. Communication

1.9.1. The pilot did not have a handheld radio.

1.10. Launch Site Information

1.10.1. Lion's Head is 10.83nm from FACT.

Location	Lion's Head Mountain, Western Cape Province
Approved site	Licensed
GPS co-ordinates	33°56'05" South 18°23'21" East
Elevation	1823 feet

1.11. Wreckage and Impact Information

1.11.1. The CCTV footage showed the pilot and two other colleagues flying their paragliders near the mountain; *the duration of the footage is 1 minute and 42 seconds*. Towards the end of the footage, the subject paraglider entered what could be described as a barrel roll in a clockwise direction before the recording ended as the paraglider disappeared below the rocks.

1.11.2. The paraglider impacted the ground near a hiking trail. Two hikers reported that they heard a sound that was made by the paraglider as it scraped against the mountain surface and saw it when it impacted the ground; they went to the accident site to assist the pilot. The paraglider (structure) and the control lines were not damaged during the accident sequence. Some of the harness straps were damaged during the accident sequence. The harness straps that were still intact were cut by the first responders when they arrived at the scene to assist the pilot. The helmet had remained secured to the pilot's head; it sustained minor damage. It was believed that the pilot had an Insta360 camera attached to his helmet; however, it was missing from the accident site.



Figure 6: The paraglider (structure) sustained minor damage.

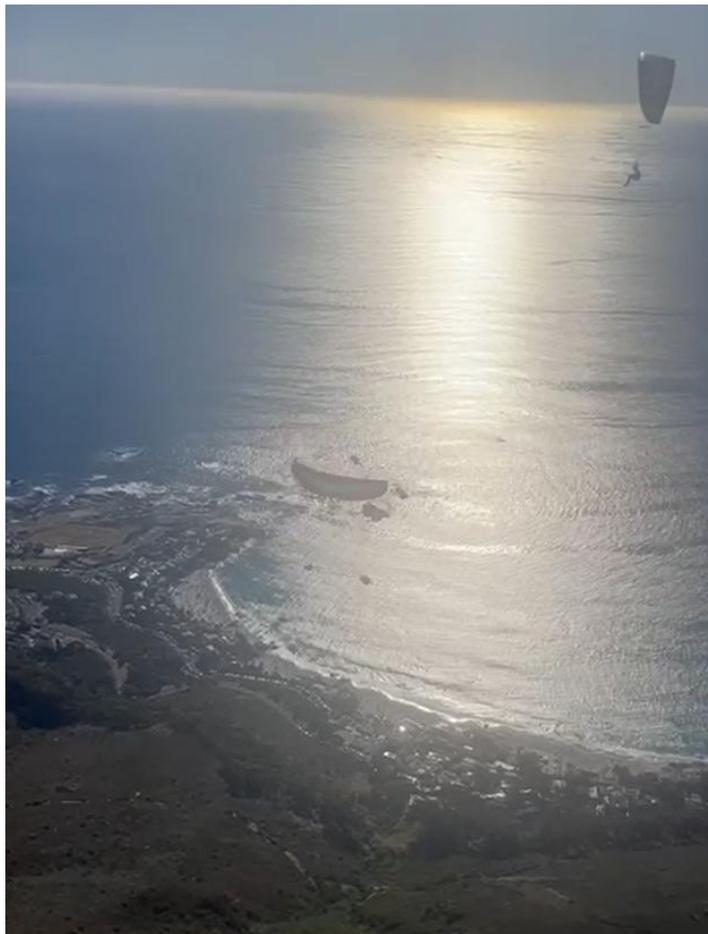


Figure 7: A still image from the CCTV footage which shows the paraglider in a barrel roll.
(Source: SAHPA)



Figure 8: Damage on the harness straps.

1.12. **Medical and Pathological Information**

1.12.1. To be discussed in the final report.

1.13. **Fire**

1.13.1. Not applicable.

1.14. **Survival Aspects**

1.14.1. The accident was not survivable as the pilot impacted the mountain (rocks) as the paraglider accelerated towards the ground and with the harness padding only providing limited protection. The helmet was strapped to the pilot's head; it sustained minor damage. It took paramedics approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes to reach the accident site. The paramedics were unable to resuscitate the pilot.

1.15. **Tests and Research**

1.15.1. To be discussed in the final report.

1.16. Organisational and Management Information

1.16.1 The Lion's Head Mountain is part of the Table Mountain National Park and is a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Site.

1.16.2 The pilot was a member of the SAHPA and had more than 378 flight experience; he also had a Level 2 Hang-paragliding permit from the South African National Parks (SANparks).

1.16.3 The paraglider was acquired by the owner in 2025, and the harness was acquired in 2022; they were both in good condition.

1.17. Additional Information

1.17.1. To be discussed in the final report

1.18. Useful or Effective Investigation Techniques

1.18.1. None.

2. FINDINGS

2.1. General

From the available evidence, the following preliminary findings were made with respect to this accident. These shall not be read as apportioning blame or liability to any organisation or individual.

To serve the objective of this investigation, the following sections are included in the conclusions heading:

- **Findings** — are statements of all significant conditions, events, or circumstances in this accident. The findings are significant steps in this accident sequence, but they are not always causal or indicate deficiencies.

2.2. Findings

2.2.1. The pilot had a National Pilot Licence in Paragliding which was initially issued on 13 April 2022. The licence was renewed on 27 June 2025 with an expiry date of 30 June 2027. The pilot also had two paragliding ratings, namely: Basic and Sport.

- 2.2.2. The pilot had a valid Class 4 medical certificate that was issued on 27 June 2025 with an expiry date of 30 June 2026.
- 2.2.3. The pilot was a member of the South African Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association (SAHPA) and had a Level 2 Hang-paragliding permit from the South African National Parks (SANparks).
- 2.2.4. The weather was fair at the time of the flight.
- 2.2.5. The airworthiness of the paraglider and harness could not be confirmed as there was no information regarding the pre-flight inspection.
- 2.2.6. Some of the harness straps sustained damage during the accident sequence; those that remained intact were cut by the first responders when they freed the pilot to offer medical assistance. The paraglider (structure) and the control lines were not damaged.
- 2.2.7. The paraglider and the harness straps were sent for tests; the results will be discussed in the final report.
- 2.2.8. The paramedics took approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes to reach the accident site.

3. ON-GOING INVESTIGATION

- 3.1. The AIID investigation is on-going, and the investigators will investigate other aspects of this accident which may or may not have safety implications.

4. SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1. None.

5. APPENDICES

- 5.1. Appendix 1 – Lion’s Head Mountain cautionary notes.

This report is issued by:

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

Appendix 1: Lion's Head Mountain Cautionary Notes

- Lion's Head is part of the *Table Mountain National Park* and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is one of the last remaining sites of critically-endangered floral species. Please do not damage or destroy vegetation.
- Only launch at the two designated launch sites. Do not pioneer a new launch site. Do not launch from the path or the very top of Lion's Head.
- Do not leave valuables in your car.
- Lion's Head has complex weather systems; please ask the locals for advice. You may contact [The Glen Paragliding Club](#) for experienced pilots to brief you.
- When it is soarable, the strong venturi effect at both launch sites can be hazardous.
- Ensure that your takeoff is directly into the wind and that the conditions are within your capabilities.
- Penetration into the wind becomes difficult beyond either take-off site. Begin your soaring flight with very short tracks, back and forwards, until you have established the limits of the venturi effect at each side of the peak.
- If you are blown over the back of Lion's Head, try to fly around the side as much as possible (not directly behind the peak). Turn and run for the end of Signal Hill or Green Point if possible.
- If your forward penetration is low, overfly the landing field before beginning your descent. There is usually no gradient; sometimes, the wind can be stronger at lower levels. Do not give up your altitude, hoping to find less wind closer to the ground; this is rarely the case.
- When the wind turns southerly, the spine which runs down Lion's Head to Camps Bay High School generates lift on its windward side, and sink on the leeward side, so fly to the left of the spine to reach the landing field; otherwise, you'll be forced to slope-land.
- In [Berg wind](#) conditions (prevailing NE wind), it may be tempting to sneak off Lion's Head in a thermic cycle. This is a VERY BAD IDEA because the hot, dry, and descending air will try to mix with the cool, moist sea air, making conditions very unstable on the way to the landing field. There should be a shear layer between the two air masses with violent lift and sink.
- Lion's Head is also popular with speedfliers; however, please take note of SACAA General Notice GAD#001-2021, which requires speedwing pilots to have a paragliding license and be members of SAHPA.