

PRELIMINARY ACCIDENT REPORT

Accident and Incident Investigations Division

Accident
- Preliminary Report -
AIID Ref No: CA18/2/3/10657



Figure 1: A file picture of the ZS-JBO aircraft. (Source: [//www.jetphotos.com/photo](http://www.jetphotos.com/photo))

Description:

On Wednesday morning, 27 May 2026, a student pilot (SP) on-board a Cessna 172M aircraft was engaged in a solo training flight from Secunda Aerodrome (FASC) in Mpumalanga province to the general flying area (GFA), with the intention to return to the departure aerodrome.

According to available information, the SP departed from Runway (RWY) 29. Upon his return to FASC and whilst on final approach for RWY 29, the aircraft encountered a wind shear. At that stage, the flaps were selected to 30°. The SP initiated a go-around and retracted the flaps, but they failed to retract. The airspeed decayed and the stall warning activated. Shortly after, the SP noticed smoke and, thereafter, fire in the cockpit. The SP identified a field near a golf course to the right of his flight path on which to conduct a forced landing. Whilst flying over the golf course's perimeter fence, the SP unbuckled his seatbelt, but found it stuck. He then used the

fire in the cockpit to burn the seat belt material to break free. Thereafter, he opened the aircraft's left-side door and jumped out before the aircraft impacted the ground.

The SP sustained serious injuries to his face and burn wounds to his right leg and both arms. The aircraft was destroyed during the accident.

Occurrence Details

Reference Number	: CA18/2/3/10657
Occurrence Category	: Accident (Category 1)
Type of Operation	: Training (Part 141)
Name of Operator	: Aviation Junction
Aircraft Registration	: ZS-JBO
Aircraft Make and Model	: Cessna 172M
Nationality	: Saudi Arabian
Registration Marks	: ZS-JBO
Place	: On a field near Graceland Golf Course, Mpumalanga province
Date and Time	: 27 May 2026 at 1030Z
Injuries	: Serious
Damage	: Destroyed

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 Cessna 172M aircraft near Graceland Golf Course, Secunda, Mpumalanga province, on 27 May 2026 at 1030Z. The occurrence was classified as an accident according to the CAR 2011 Part 12 and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) STD Annex 13 definitions.

The AIID has appointed an investigator-in-charge to conduct a full investigation. The investigator was dispatched to the accident site. Notifications were sent to the State of Registry, Operator, and Design and Manufacturer in accordance with the CAR 2011 Part 12 and the ICAO Annex 13 Chapter 4. The States did not appoint an accredited representative and/or advisor. The AIID will lead the investigation and issue the final report of this accident in accordance with the CAR 2011 Part 12 and the ICAO Annex 13.

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

Aircraft — the Cessna 172M involved in this accident

Investigation — the investigation into the circumstances of this accident

Pilot — the pilot involved in this accident

Report — this accident report

2. *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

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Abbreviation	Description
°	Degrees
°C	Degrees Celsius
AIID	Accident and Incident Investigations Division
AGL	Above Ground Level
AMO	Aircraft Maintenance Organisation
ATO	Approved Training Organisation
CAR	Civil Aviation Regulation
C of A	Certificate of Airworthiness
C of R	Certificate of Registration
CRS	Certificate of Release to Service
FAEO	Ermelo Aerodrome
FASC	Secunda Aerodrome
ft	Feet
GFA	General Flying Area
GPS	Global Positioning System
hPa	Hectopascal
kt	Knots
nm	Nautical Miles
m	Metres
MHz	Megahertz
METAR	Meteorological Aerodrome Report
RWY	Runway
SAWS	South African Weather Service
SO	Safety Officer
SP	Student Pilot
SPL	Student Pilot Licence
VMC	Visual Meteorological Conditions
Z	Zulu (Term for Universal Co-ordinated Time - Zero Hours Greenwich)

1. FACTUAL INFORMATION

1.1. History of Flight

- 1.1.1. On Wednesday morning, 27 May 2026, a student pilot (SP) on-board a Cessna 172M aircraft was engaged in a solo training flight from Secunda Aerodrome (FASC), Mpumalanga province, to the general flying area (GFA) with the intention to return to the departure aerodrome. The flight was conducted under visual meteorological conditions (VMC) by day and under the provisions of Part 141 of the Civil Aviation Regulations (CAR) 2011, as amended.
- 1.1.2. According to available information, the SP completed the pre-flight checks and refuelled the aircraft with 60 litres of Avgas. *The total quantity of fuel after refuelling could not be confirmed at the time of publishing of this preliminary report.* There were no defects recorded in the flight folio. The aircraft took off at approximately 0930Z from Runway (RWY) 29. Upon his return from the GFA, his aircraft was the only one in the circuit at that time. The safety officer (SO) stated that the SP selected to land on Runway (RWY) 29. He completed all the downwind checks with the wing flaps selected to 30° on final approach. Once the aircraft reached the runway, the SP performed a go-around as the aircraft encountered a windshear. During the go-around, the SP was unable to retract the wing flaps. The indicated airspeed (IAS) decayed, and the stall warning activated. The SP managed to recover the aircraft, but soon noticed smoke and, thereafter, fire in the cockpit.
- 1.1.3. The SP identified a field on a golf course to his right on which to perform a forced landing. After flying over the golf course perimeter fence, he unbuckled his seatbelt but found it stuck. He then used the fire in the cockpit to burn the seatbelt material to break free. Thereafter, he opened the aircraft's left-side door and jumped out, approximately 6 to 8 feet (ft) above ground level (AGL) before the aircraft impacted the ground. The SP sustained serious injuries to his face due to impact with the ground and burn wounds to his right leg and both arms.
- 1.1.4. Several golf course workers stated that they heard a sound of an aircraft approaching and, within seconds, they heard a bang. When they looked towards the direction of the sound (bang), they saw grey to black smoke coming from the aircraft. They also stated that the engine sound stopped after the bang (impact). They further stated that they rushed to the accident site and were met with fire which was spreading on dry grass. The SP was approximately 20 metres (m) from the wreckage, and the fire was spreading towards him. The workers moved the SP to a safe distance and reported the accident to their superiors. The SP was taken to a local hospital, and the aircraft was destroyed by the fire.

1.1.5. The accident occurred during the day, approximately 2 330m from FASC in Mpumalanga province, at Global Positioning System (GPS) co-ordinates determined to be 26°30'54" South 29°09'40" East, at a field elevation of 5 195ft.



Figure 2: An aerial view of the accident site which is approximately 2 330m from FASC RWY 29.
(Source: Google Earth)

1.2. Injuries to Persons

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

Note: Other means people on the ground.

1.2.1. The SP sustained serious burn wounds from the fire and facial injuries after jumping out of the airborne aircraft.

1.3. **Damage to Aircraft**

1.3.1. The aircraft was destroyed by the fire which initiated from the cockpit.



Figure 3: The burnt wreckage of ZS-JBO.

1.4. **Other Damage**

1.4.1. None.

1.5. Personnel Information

Nationality	Saudi Arabian	Gender	Male	Age	20
Licence Type	Student Pilot Licence (SPL)				
Licence Valid	Yes	Type Endorsed	Yes		
Ratings	None				
Medical Expiry Date	30 November 2028				
Restrictions	None				
Previous Accidents	None				

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

Flying Experience:

Total Hours	74.2
Total Past 24 Hours	0
Total Past 7 Days	2.3
Total Past 90 Days	4.1
Total on Type Past 90 Days	4.1
Total on Type	4.1

- 1.5.1. The SP had a valid Student Pilot Licence (SPL) that was issued on 25 January 2024 with an expiry date of 15 March 2027. His Class 2 aviation medical certificate was issued on 13 November 2023 with an expiry date of 30 November 2028 and with no restrictions.
- 1.5.2. The SP started his training with a former (different) approved training organisation (ATO) on 11 July 2024 during which he flew a Tecnam Echo aircraft. His first solo flight was on 8 May 2025 at approximately 37.0 hours. He later registered with the current ATO on 25 February 2026 and transitioned from Tecnam Echo to Cessna 172. The Cessna 172 was endorsed in his logbook on 7 May 2026. He had since flown 4.1 hours on the aircraft type.

1.6. Aircraft Information

- 1.6.1. The Cessna 172M is a four-seat, single-engine, high-wing aircraft manufactured by the Cessna Aircraft Company.

Airframe:

Manufacturer/Model	Cessna Aircraft Company / 172M	
Serial Number	172-63614	
Year of Manufacture	1975	
Total Airframe Hours (At Time of Accident)	22 791.5	
Last Inspection (Date & Hours)	8 May 2026	22739.6
Hours Since Last Inspection	54.5	
CRS Issue Date	12 May 2026	
C of A (Issue Date & Expiry Date)	29 February 2012	28 February 2027
C of R (Issue Date) (Present Owner)	11 December 2024	
Type of Fuel Used	Avgas	
Operating Category	Training (Part 141)	
Previous Accidents	The aircraft was involved in four other occurrences in the past: 1. On 9 January 2003, a forced landing near FAGM was conducted following an engine power loss in-flight. CA18/2/3/7618 2. On 6 December 2006, a pilot failed to activate the park brake after a flight from FAWB to FALA. The left wing was damaged, as well as a signpost due to the wind that moved the aircraft whilst parked. CA18/3/2/0546 3. On 16 November 2021, the aircraft was involved in a hard landing at FAWB. CA18/2/3/10077 4. On 11 July 2022, the aircraft bounced after landing at FAWB, and the nose wheel broke off. CA18/3/2/1400	

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

Engine:

Manufacturer/Model	Lycoming
Part Number	0-320-E2D
Serial Number	L-29907-27A
Hours Since New	1 579.0
Hours Since Overhaul	52.0

Propeller:

Manufacturer/Model	McCauley Propellers
Part Number	1C160/DTM7553
Serial Number	AHD44012
Hours Since New	1579.0
Hours Since Overhaul	Unknown

1.6.2. The engine was removed on 13 July 2022 for the firewall to be repaired; it was reinstalled on 22 September 2022 at 20 534.8 airframe hours. The repairs were conducted due to a hard landing that occurred on 11 July 2022. The engine was removed and overhauled on 31 October 2023 at 21 212.6 airframe hours; it was reinstalled on 21 November 2023.

1.6.3. The propeller total hours and history will be discussed in the final report.

1.6.4. The aircraft had a valid Certificate of Airworthiness (C of A) that was originally issued on 29 February 2012. The latest C of A had an expiry date of 28 February 2027. The Certificate of Registration (C of R) was issued to the present owner on 4 March 2022.

1.6.5. The aircraft's Certificate of Release to Service (CRS) was issued on 12 May 2026 at 22 739.6 airframe hours with an expiry date of 12 May 2027 or at 22 839.6 airframe hours, whichever occurs first. The aircraft maintenance organisation (AMO) which maintained the aircraft had an AMO Certificate that was issued by the Regulator.

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 Ermelo (FAEO) on 27 May 2026 between 1000Z and 1100Z. The accident site was approximately 44nm from FAEO.

Wind Direction	210°	Wind Speed	05kts	Visibility	10km
Temperature	20°C	Cloud Cover	Nil	Cloud Base	N/A
Dew Point	04°C	QNH	1028hPa		

1.8. Aids to Navigation

- 1.8.1. The aircraft was equipped with standard navigational equipment as approved by the Regulator. There were no records indicating that the navigational equipment was unserviceable before the flight.

1.9. Communication

- 1.9.1. The aircraft was equipped with a standard communication system as approved by the Regulator. There were no recorded defects with the communication system before the flight.

1.10. Aerodrome Information

- 1.10.1. The aircraft crashed on a field near a golf course, approximately 2 330m from FASC RWY 29.

Aerodrome Location	Secunda Aerodrome (FASC)
Aerodrome Status	Licensed
Aerodrome GPS coordinates	26°31'14.00" South 029°10'20.00" East
Aerodrome Elevation	5 250ft
Runway Headings	11/29
Dimensions of Runway Used	1100m x 18m
Heading of Runway Used	29
Surface of Runway Used	Asphalt
Approach Facilities	None
Radio Frequency	122.00-MHz

1.11. Flight Recorders

- 1.11.1. The aircraft was neither equipped with a flight data recorder (FDR) or a cockpit voice recorder (CVR), nor was it required by regulation to be fitted to the aircraft type.

1.12. Wreckage and Impact Information

- 1.12.1. The SP identified a field near a golf course on which to conduct a forced landing. He opened the aircraft's left door and jumped out of the aircraft at an approximate height of 6 to 8ft AGL.

1.12.2. Golf course workers heard an aircraft and, within seconds, a bang. Thereafter, they saw grey to black smoke coming from the crashed aircraft. They rushed to the accident site and discovered fire spreading on dry grass. The workers also stated that the engine sound stopped after the bang (impact).



Figures 4 and 5: The nose landing gear and the engine casing were not scorched by the fire.

1.12.3. It could not be determined at this stage how the aircraft impacted the ground; however, the nose landing gear and left main landing gear (MLG) were found detached from the fuselage; they were not burnt by the fire. The main wreckage was destroyed by the fire which made it difficult to identify some of the aircraft's components. The main cabin was reduced to ashes, and the right-side MLG and wing were found in their correct places in relation to the design of the aircraft; however, the left wing sustained structural damage and was found near the empennage, (see Figure 6). The engine casing did not sustain any scoring. Both propeller blades were found bent backwards.



Figure 6: Identification of major aircraft components.

1.13. Medical and Pathological Information

1.13.1. The SP was initially admitted to a local hospital in Secunda; however, due to sustained serious facial injuries which required specialised surgery, he was transferred to a hospital in Gauteng province.

1.14. Fire

1.14.1. The SP was attempting to conduct a go-around when the fire started in the cockpit which prompted him to perform a forced landing on a field near a golf course. *The aircraft was equipped with a fire extinguisher.* The aircraft was destroyed by the fire.

1.15. Survival Aspects

1.15.1. The accident was survivable. The SP's decision to jump out of the aircraft saved him from a potentially fatal accident.

1.16. Tests and Research

1.16.1. To be discussed in the final report.

1.17. Organisational and Management Information

1.17.1. The ATO had a valid Approved Training Organisation Certificate that was issued by the Regulator on 15 July 2024 with an expiry date of 31 July 2029.

1.17.2. The AMO which conducted the last maintenance inspection had an Aircraft Maintenance Organisation Certificate that was issued by the Regulator on 11 July 2025 with an expiry date of 31 July 2026.

1.18. Additional Information

1.18.1. To be discussed in the final report.

1.19. Useful or Effective Investigation Techniques

1.19.1. 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 student pilot had a Student Pilot Licence (SPL) that was initially issued on 25 January 2024 with an expiry date of 15 March 2027. The SP had a total of 74.2 flying hours of which 4.1 hours were on the Cessna 172M aircraft. The aircraft was endorsed in his logbook on 7 May 2026.
- 2.2.2. The SP had a Class 2 medical certificate that was issued on 14 November 2023 with an expiry date of 30 November 2028 with no medical restrictions.
- 2.2.3. The aircraft Certificate of Release to Service (CRS) was issued on 12 May 2026 at 22 739.6 airframe hours with an expiry date of 12 May 2027 or at 22 839.6 airframe hours, whichever occurs first.
- 2.2.4. The aircraft had a valid Certificate of Airworthiness (C of A) that was initially issued by the Regulator on 29 February 2012. The latest C of A had an expiry date of 28 February 2027. The aircraft was airworthy when it was dispatched for the flight.
- 2.2.5. The Certificate of Registration (C of R) was issued to the present owner on 4 March 2022.
- 2.2.6. The approved training organisation (ATO) had an ATO Certificate that was issued by the Regulator on 15 July 2024 with an expiry date of 31 July 2029.
- 2.2.7. The aircraft maintenance organisation (AMO) that conducted the last maintenance inspection had an AMO Certificate that was issued by the Regulator on 11 July 2025 with an expiry date of 31 July 2026.

3. ON-GOING INVESTIGATION

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

4. SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. General

The safety recommendations listed in this report are proposed according to paragraph 6.8 of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation and are based on the conclusions listed in heading 3 of this report. The AIID expects that all safety issues identified by the investigation are addressed by the receiving States and organisations.

4.2. Safety Recommendation/s

4.2.1. None.

5. APPENDICES

5.1. None.

This report is issued by:

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