PRELIMINARY ACCIDENT REPORT

Accident and Incident Investigations Division

Accident
- Preliminary Report -
AIID Ref No: CA18/2/3/10638

Figure 1: The ZU-LOW aircraft as it came to rest after the accident.

Description:

On Thursday afternoon, 19 February 2026, a flight crew comprising two pilots on-board a Sling 2 aircraft registered ZU-LOW were engaged in a flight instructor's patter training flight from Grand Central Airport (FAGC) in Gauteng province with the intention to return to FAGC. The pilot monitoring (PM) was seated on the left seat; he had a Grade II Flight Instructor's rating. The pilot flying (PF) was seated on the right seat and was the pilot receiving training. The aircraft took off from FAGC and routed to the general flying area (GFA). At approximately 1600Z, the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC) received a satellite distress alert from the aircraft's emergency locator transmitter (ELT) and a search and rescue mission was activated. The emergency services which comprised the South African Police Services (SAPS), search and rescue teams and the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) swiftly responded to the site where the ELT signal was transmitted. The aircraft was found in a bush-type terrain near Sifasonke residential area in Klipgat, North West province. The aircraft was substantially damaged, and both pilots had succumbed to their injuries.

Occurrence Details

Reference Number	**:** CA18/2/3/10638
Occurrence Category	**:** Accident (Category 1)
Type of Operation	**:** Training (Part 141)
Name of Operator	**:** Excellentia Airline Academy
Aircraft Registration	**:** ZU-LOW
Aircraft Make and Model	**:** The Airplane Factory/Sling 2
Nationality	**:** South African
Registration Marks	**:** ZU-LOW
Place	**:** Bush-type terrain near Sifasonke residential area in Klipgat, North West province
Date and Time	**:** 19 February 2026 at 1600Z
Injuries	**:** Fatal
Damage	**:** Substantial

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) of the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) was notified of the occurrence involving a Sling 2 aircraft near Sifasonke residential area in Klipgat, North West province, on 19 February 2026 at 1600Z. 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 and a co-investigator who were dispatched to the accident site to conduct a full investigation. Notifications were sent to the State of Registry and Operator 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/accidents-and-incidents-archive/

Notes:

1. *Whenever the following words are mentioned in this report, they shall mean the following:*
   Accident — this investigated accident
   Aircraft — the Sling 2 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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Table of Contents

Abbreviation	Description
°	Degrees
°C	Degrees Celsius
ACCID	Accident
AIID	Accident and Incident Investigations Division
AMO	Aircraft Maintenance Organisation
ARCC	Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre
C of A	Certificate of Airworthiness
C of R	Certificate of Registration
CAR	Civil Aviation Regulations
CAVOK	Cloud and Visibility OK
CPL	Commercial Pilot Licence
CRS	Certificate of Release to Service
CVR	Cockpit Voice Recorder
ECU	Engine Control Unit
FAGC	Grand Central Airport
FAWB	Wonderboom Aerodrome
Ft	Feet
GPS	Global Positioning System
hPa	Hectopascal
Kt	Knots
M	Metres
METAR	Meteorological Aerodrome Report
MHz	Megahertz
Nm	Nautical Miles
QNH	Altitude Above Mean Sea Level
PIC	Pilot-in-Command
PF	Pilot Flying
SACAA	South African Civil Aviation Authority
SAWS	South African Weather Service
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 Thursday afternoon, 19 February 2026, a flight crew comprising two pilots on-board a Sling 2 aircraft registered ZU-LOW were engaged in a flight instructor's patter training flight from Grand Central Airport (FAGC) in Gauteng province with the intention to return to the same airport. 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. The aircraft flight folio page Serial Number 43002 showed no fuel upliftment before the flight. The pilot seated on the left seat had a Grade II Flight Instructor's rating and was the pilot monitoring (PM). The pilot seated on the right seat was the pilot flying (PF) and was receiving training. The information gathered during the on-site investigation revealed that the pilots were practising stall exercises. At approximately 1600Z, the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC) received a satellite distress alert from the aircraft's emergency locator transmitter (ELT). The ARCC activated a search and rescue mission. The emergency services which comprised the South African Police Services (SAPS), the search and rescue teams and the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) swiftly responded to the accident site where the ELT signal was transmitted. The aircraft was found in a bush-type terrain near Sifasonke residential area in Klipgat, North West province. The aircraft was substantially damaged, and both pilots had succumbed to their injuries.

1.1.3. The accident occurred in a bush-type terrain near Sifasonke residential area in Klipgat, North West province, approximately 15 nautical miles (nm) north-west of Wonderboom Airport (FAWB), Gauteng province, at Global Positioning System (GPS) co-ordinates determined as 25°29′34.6″ South 27°58′03.3″ East, at an elevation of 4 970 feet (ft).

Figure 2: The approximate accident site (blue pin), and Sifasonke residential area (red arrow). (Source: Google Earth)

1.2. Injuries to Persons

1.2.1. Both pilots were fatally injured.

Injuries	Pilot	Crew	Pass.	Total On-board	Other
Fatal	2	-	-	2	-
Serious	-	-	-	-	-
Minor	-	-	-	-	-
None	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**2**	**-**	**-**	**2**	**-**

Note: Other means people on the ground.

1.3. Damage to Aircraft

1.3.1. The aircraft was substantially damaged.

Figure 3: The aircraft at the accident site.

1.4. **Other Damage**

1.4.1. None.

1.5. **Personnel Information**

1.5.1 Pilot Monitoring (PM):

Nationality	South African	Gender	Male	Age	25
Licence Type	Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL)				
Licence Valid	Yes	Type Endorsed	Yes		
Ratings	Instrument and Instructor Grade II Rating				
Medical Expiry Date	30 June 2026				
Restrictions	None				
Previous Accidents	None				

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

Flying Experience (PM):

Total Hours	425.2
Total Past 24 Hours	Unknown
Total Past 7 Days	Unknown
Total Past 90 Days	Unknown
Total on Type Past 90 Days	Unknown
Total on Type	1.8

1.5.2 The hours captured above are the PM's recorded hours at the time he tested for the Grade II Flight Instructor rating test on 6 February 2026. The pilot had a Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) with Grade II Instructor rating for fixed wing aircraft.

1.5.3 Pilot Flying (PF):

Nationality	South African	Gender	Male	Age	28
Licence Type	Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) Aeroplane				
Licence Valid	Yes	Type Endorsed	Yes		
Ratings	Instrument Rating				
Medical Expiry Date	31 August 2026				
Restrictions	None				
Previous Accidents	None				

Flying Experience (PF):

Total Hours	294
Total Past 24 Hours	1.3
Total Past 7 Days	5.2
Total Past 90 Days	Unknown
Total on Type Past 90 Days	Unknown
Total on Type	5.2

1.5.4 The hours captured above are the recorded PF's hours at the time he renewed his CPL on 14 January 2026. The pilot had a CPL Aeroplane.

1.6. **Aircraft Information**

1.6.1. Aircraft Description (Source: Pilot's Operating Handbook [POH])

The Sling 2 LSA is a two-seat (side-by-side), single-engine aircraft of semi monocoque construction. The aircraft is powered by a four-stroke, four cylinders horizontally opposed spark ignition Rotax 912 ULS engine with one central camshaft pushrod. The engine features liquid cooled cylinder heads with ram air cooled cylinders. It comprised of a dry sump forced lubrication and had a dual contactless capacitor discharge magneto type ignition system. The engine also comprised a mechanical fuel pump and a backup electrical fuel pump. It is fitted with the Garmin electronic flight instrument system (EFIS) which provided full primary flight display attitude and directional guidance along electronic engine parameters information on a multi-colour liquid crystal display (LCD) screen.

Airframe:

Manufacturer/Model	The Airplane Factory/Sling 2	
Serial Number	448B	
Year of Manufacture	2025	
Total Airframe Hours (At Time of Accident)	18.4	
Last Inspection (Date & Hours)	Not yet reached	10 November 2026
Hours Since Last Inspection	18.4 (since manufacturing)	
CRS Issue Date	11 November 2025	
ATF (Issue Date & Expiry Date)	27 November 2025	26 November 2026
C of R (Issue Date) (Present Owner)	16 October 2016	
Type of Fuel Used	Avgas 100LL	
Operating Category	Training (Part 141)	
Previous Accidents	None	

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

Engine:

Manufacturer/Model	Bombardier - Rotax GmbH / 912 iS
Serial Number	10007521
Hours Since New	18.4
Hours Since Overhaul	Time Between Overhaul (TBO) interval is 2 000 hours. TBO not reached

Propeller:

Manufacturer/Model	Duc Helices Propeller / MFSH -3
Serial Number	6509
Hours Since New	18.4
Hours Since Overhaul	TBO Not yet reached

1.6.2. The aircraft had a valid Authority-to-Fly Certificate that was issued by the Regulator on 27 November 2025 with an expiry date of 26 November 2026.

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 Wonderboom Airport (FAWB) on 19 February 2026 at 1600Z. The accident site was located 15nm south-west of FAWB.

Wind Direction	090°	Wind Speed	03 kt	Visibility	9999
Temperature	29°C	Cloud Cover	None	Cloud Base	None
Dew Point	07°C	QNH	1015 hPa		

1.8. Aids to Navigation

1.8.1. The aircraft was equipped with standard navigational equipment as approved by the Regulator (SACAA). There were no records indicating that the navigational equipment was unserviceable prior to 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 prior to the flight.

1.10. Aerodrome Information

1.10.1 The accident occurred in a bush-type terrain near Sifasonke residential area in Klipgat, North West province, approximately 15nm north-west of FAWB in Gauteng province at GPS co-ordinates determined as 25°29′34.6″ South 27°58′03.3″ East, at an elevation of 4 970 ft.

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 accident occurred in a bush-type terrain near Sifasonke residential area in Klipgat. Witness marks at the accident site indicated that the aircraft was in a near vertical attitude when it impacted the ground with the landing gears. All three landing gears broke off; the pitot tube on the left side underwing also broke and was pushed up (UP position). The aircraft came to rest in an upright position. None of the trees/branches at the accident site was severed. There was also no evidence of skid marks at the scene (behind the aircraft). The fuel tanks ruptured on impact, and thus, there was a strong smell of fuel at the accident site. The flight controls were examined and were found

operational. Severe buckling was observed on the top surfaces of the wings. The rivets securing the wing-tip fairings had also sheared off.

Figure 4: The aircraft in its resting position.

Figure 5: The broken pitot tube.

Figure 6: Evidence of buckling (yellow arrows) on the left wing and the rivets that sheared off (red arrows), resulting in the separation of the wing fairing.

1.12.2 Examination of the cockpit cabin area showed nothing abnormal. None of the circuit breakers popped. The auxiliary fuel pump was in the ON position, and the fuel selector was selected to the left tank. The flaps control switch was in the UP position.

Figures 7 and 8: The fuel selector on the left tank (left picture). The flap control switch in the UP position (right picture).

1.12.3 The engine axle partially separated from the firewall. The propeller had remained attached to the flange. Two composite propeller blades also remained intact which indicated that the engine was delivering power at the time of impact. The electronic flight instrument system (EFIS) and the engine control unit (ECU) were recovered by Rotax engineers for further investigation.

Figure 9: The propeller with one broken blade; the other two blades had remained intact.

1.13. Medical and Pathological Information

1.13.1. To be discussed in the final report.

1.14. **Fire**

1.14.1. There was no pre- or post-impact fire.

1.15. **Survival Aspects**

1.15.1. The accident was not survivable due to the high impact forces that were deemed to exceed the maximum threshold tolerance of human physiology.

1.16. **Tests and Research**

1.16.1. To be discussed on the final report.

1.17. **Organisational and Management Information**

1.17.1. This was a training flight conducted under the provisions of Part 141 of the CAR 2011, as amended.

1.17.2. The Approved Training Organisation (ATO) had an ATO Certificate that was issued by the Regulator on 19 March 2025 with an expiry date of 31 March 2030.

1.17.3. The ATO had an Operations Specifications Certificate that was issued by the Regulator on 26 January 2026 with an expiry of 31 March 2026. The aircraft was listed on the operator's Operations Specifications Certificate.

1.18. **Additional Information**

1.18.1. None.

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 pilot monitoring (PM) who was seated on the left seat was initially issued a Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) by the Regulator (SACAA) on 25 August 2023. The licence was reissued on 6 December 2025 with an expiry date of 31 December 2026.

2.2.2. The PM had a Class 1 aviation medical certificate that was issued on 17 June 2025 with an expiry date of 30 June 2026. The PM had no medical restrictions listed in his medical certificate.

2.2.3. The pilot flying (PF) (receiving training) who was seated on the right seat had a CPL that was initially issued by the Regulator on 17 December 2024. The licence was reissued on 21 January 2026 with an expiry date of 31 January 2027.

2.2.4. The PF had a Class 1 aviation medical certificate that was issued on 8 August 2025 with an expiry date of 31 August 2026. The PF had no medical restrictions listed in his medical certificate.

2.2.5. The aircraft was issued an Authority-to-Fly (ATF) Certificate on 27 November 2025 with an expiry date of 26 November 2026.

2.2.6. The aircraft Certificate of Registration (C of R) was issued to the present owner on 16 October 2025.

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 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. To be discussed on the final report.

5. APPENDICES

5.1. None.

This report is issued by:

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