

INTERIM STATEMENT**Accident and Incident Investigations Division**

Accident
- Interim Statement -
AIID Ref No: CA18/2/3/10007



Figure 1: A file picture of the ZU-FXE aircraft. (Source:microlighters.co.za)

Description:

On 26 May 2021, a pilot on-board a Bushbaby Explorer was engaged in solo circuit exercises at Polokwane Civil Aerodrome (FAPI) Runway 08 (RWY08) and in contact with the tower air traffic control (ATC) at Polokwane International Airport (FAPP) on frequency 114.50 Megahertz (MHz). During the fourth circuit whilst on downwind, the pilot reported an engine failure to FAPP ATC, further stating that he intended to execute a forced landing at FAPI. On the final glide path for landing at FAPI, the aircraft collided with a thorn tree, approximately 20 metres from the aerodrome's perimeter fence. The aircraft swung about 180 degrees before it came to rest facing south. A post-impact fire erupted thereafter and consumed the aircraft. The pilot managed to escape from the burning wreckage, but he sustained burn wounds. He was treated by emergency personnel at the scene, however, he later succumbed to the injuries in hospital the following day.

DESCRIPTION OF OCCURRENCE

Occurrence Reference	: CA18/2/3/10007
Occurrence Category	: Accident
Name of the Operator	: Fire Creek Investments 59 CC
Manufacturer	: Kitplanes for Africa
Aircraft Model	: Bushbaby Explorer
Engine	: BMW GS1200
Nationality	: South African
Registration	: ZU-FXE
Manufacture Serial Number	: 154-06-11 EXP
Date of Manufacture	: 2011
Flight Hours/Cycles	: 65.3
Type of Flight	: Private (Part 94)
State of Occurrence	: South Africa
Place of Occurrence	: Polokwane Civil Aerodrome (FAPI), Limpopo Province
Date and Time	: 26 May 2021, 1451Z
Total Crewmembers	: 1
Total Passengers	: 0
Injuries to Passengers and Crew	: 1
Other Injuries	: Fatal
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 first anniversary interim statement gives a brief on the investigation progress and should be read in conjunction with the preliminary report with reference number CA18/2/3/10007 that was published on 27 June 2021.

This interim statement is released in accordance with Standard 6.6 of ICAO *Annex 13 and* CAR Part 12.05.1(7). Later, the 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 Accident and Incident Investigations Division (AIID) on AIIDinbox@caa.co.za

Investigation process:

The occurrence was categorised as an accident and the AIID had assigned an accident investigation file number CA18/2/3/10007 for this investigation.

The AIID had appointed an investigator-in-charge (IIC), supported by investigators from the AIID. The investigators dispatched to the scene on 27 May 2021. The German Investigation Authority, being the State of the engine manufacture, was notified of the accident and had assigned an accredited representative (AP) for this investigation. 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:

<http://www.caa.co.za/Pages/Accidents%20and%20Incidents/Aircraft-accident-reports.aspx>

Disclaimer:

This interim statement is produced without prejudice to the rights of the SACAA, which are reserved.

Interim Statement

This first anniversary interim statement gives a brief account of the progress of the investigation into the subject accident. This interim statement is released in accordance with Standard 6.6 of the ICAO Annex 13 and CAR Part 12.05.1(7).

The accident occurred on 26 May 2021 in which a privately operated Bushbaby Explorer with registration ZU-FXE departed Polokwane Civil Aerodrome (FAPI) in Limpopo province, South Africa.

At approximately 1451Z, the pilot was conducting circuit exercises at FAPI and in radio contact with Polokwane International Airport (FAPP) tower air traffic control (ATC) on frequency 114.50 Megahertz (MHz). During the fourth circuit whilst on downwind, the aircraft experienced an engine failure, and the pilot notified the ATC that he was gliding back to FAPI for a forced landing. However, the aircraft collided with a thorn tree, swung 180 degrees and crashed about 20 metres from FAPI's perimeter fence. Post-impact fire consumed the aircraft. The pilot was able to escape the wreckage, but had already sustained burn wounds. He was treated by paramedics at the scene of the accident before being taken to hospital. However, he succumbed to his injuries the following day.

The aircraft's engine was recovered from the wreckage for further investigation and analysis. So far, the engine has been tested with the assistance of the manufacturer and the findings will be discussed in the final report.

The AIID is still conducting further investigation in collaboration with the SACAA, affected states, state authorities and other organisations, including the engine manufacturer.

This report is issued by:

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