

FINAL REPORT

AAIU Synoptic Report No: 2008-028
AAIU File No. 2007-0077
State File No: IRL00900942
Published: 03/12/2008

In accordance with the provisions of SI 205 of 1997, the Chief Inspector of Air Accidents, on 04 September 2007, appointed Mr. Paddy Judge as the Investigator-in-Charge to carry out a Field Investigation into this Accident and prepare a Synoptic Report.

Aircraft Type and Registration: Solar Wings Aviation Pegasus XL-Q, G-MZCP
No. and Type of Engines: 1 x Rotax 462
Aircraft Serial Number: SW-TE-0434
Year of Manufacture: 1993
Date and Time (UTC): 03 September 2007 @ 12.10 hrs
Location: Carnew, Co Wexford
Type of Flight: Private
Persons on Board: Crew - 1
Injuries: Crew - 1
Nature of Damage: Microlight destroyed
Commander's Licence: None
Commander's Details: Male, aged 55 years
Commander's Flying Experience: 25 hours, of which 0 were on type
Notification Source: Garda Síochána in Gorey
Information Source: AAIU Field Inspection

SYNOPSIS

The Pilot had recently purchased the microlight, which had been delivered the day previous to the accident. He assembled it and decided to take it for a first flight. During the landing he lost control and impacted heavily. The microlight was destroyed but there was no fire. The Pilot suffered minor injuries.

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1. FACTUAL INFORMATION

The Pilot had bought the aircraft in the UK and it had been delivered the previous day. Having rigged the aircraft he decided to take it for a flight. After take-off the Pilot found the handling of the microlight to be difficult possibly, he judged, due to a rigging error. He turned to the right and decided to land in a farm field, approximately 300 meters from his take-off point. After touchdown the nose initially lifted but, when it came back down, the microlight flipped over. The nose dug in, the nose wheel separated and the wings folded forward (**Photo No. 1**). The Pilot was injured and taken to hospital where his injuries were found to be minor.

The microlight's UK Permit to Fly had expired earlier in the year and had not been renewed by the previous owner. The Pilot had no flying licence but stated that he had about 25 hours previous experience flying a Solar Wings Hiway Demon microlight. He had no recent flying experience and had no pilot's logbook.

The Pilot stated that, at the time, he was advised by the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) that there was nowhere in the Republic of Ireland to train as a Microlight pilot for this type of aircraft, the only place being in the North of Ireland or further afield. The Investigation has been advised that such a training facility within the State was approved in 2008 by the IAA.

The Pilot stated that many years previously he flew hang gliders and later progressed to a microlight, flying this for several years when he said the activity was unregulated and no licence was required to fly one. The Pilot appeared to be unaware that a Private Pilot's Licence – Microlight is required when flying within the State.

The IAA informed the Investigation that it has issued Private Pilot's Licence - Microlight to microlight pilots since 1993 and, prior to that time, microlight pilots were issued with Student Pilot Licences by the then Department of Transport.

The National Microlight Association of Ireland (NMAI) informed the Investigation that a number of unlicensed microlight aircraft are still flying in Ireland.

2. ANALYSIS

Microlight technology and performance has developed significantly in the years since the Pilot had previously flown. The Investigation is concerned that a modern microlight was bought and that an attempt was made to fly it in this manner, without training or supervision.

Whereas the IAA regulates aviation operations and the NMAI is responsible for the oversight of all microlight aircraft (factory or kit built) under their control, the Investigation believes that these parties should address the issue of unlicenced microlight operations together and thus a Safety Recommendation is issued accordingly.

3. SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

The IAA, in conjunction with the NMAI, should review the regulatory and operational framework of microlight operations in Ireland. **(SR 24 of 2008)**

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Photo No. 1: G-MZCP post accident

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