



**AIR ACCIDENT
INVESTIGATION UNIT**

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PRELIMINARY ACCIDENT REPORT

This is preliminary information, subject to change, and may contain errors. Any errors in this Report will be corrected when the Final Report has been completed.

Report No:	2007-017
1. AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURER:	Homebuilt
Model:	Steen Skybolt, biplane
State of Registry:	Ireland
Registration:	EI-CIZ
Serial Number:	001
Year of Manufacture:	1980
2. OPERATOR:	Private
3. TYPE OF OPERATION:	Aerobatics
4. DATE / TIME:	29 July 2007 @16.30 hrs
5. POSITION OF OCCURRENCE:	Ardfert Private Airfield, Co Kerry
6. PERSONS ON BOARD:	Crew: 1 Passengers: None
7. INJURIES:	Crew: 1 (Fatal) Passengers: N/A
8. DAMAGE:	Aircraft Destroyed
9. INVESTIGATOR-IN-CHARGE:	Frank Russell

The Steen Skybolt is a homebuilt aircraft and was operated in the Permit-to-Fly category by the Pilot. He had just completed an aerobatics display in his Skybolt aircraft at the local Ardfert Festival. Weather conditions at the time were ideal for the display. He then flew to the nearby Ardfert Airfield, landed and shut down his aircraft. Here, he had a cup of tea and met and conversed with his pilot colleagues from the Coonagh Flying Club in Limerick, a small number of whom had also flown into Ardfert Airfield for the Festival.

The Pilot was on the ground for about twenty minutes prior to his departure to the aircraft's home base at Coonagh Airfield. He indicated, when asked by his friends, that he would perform a few aerobatic manoeuvres on his departure. This would not be unusual for such an experienced aerobatics pilot. On take-off, his fellow pilots on the ground observed his manoeuvres closely. They saw him first perform a roll over the airfield along the axis of the runway and then return to perform a short inverted fly past along the same axis and then complete the roll to straight and level flight. Finally, in what appears to have been the Pilot's trademark departure manoeuvre, he initiated a climbing roll to the right across the airfield. It was during this manoeuvre that all witnesses on the

ground heard the engine “bang” or “splutter” followed by silence, while the aircraft was banking in the roll. However, as the airfield hangar obscured the witnesses’ view of the final seconds, most thought that the pilot had recovered his wings level before the final impact with a hedge covered stone wall in a nearby field. This opinion is borne out by the wreckage layout. There was no fire.

These witnesses went immediately to the impact scene to render what assistance they could. The emergency services and a local medical Doctor arrived quickly on scene also. The Doctor found that the Pilot was fatally injured in the rear tandem seat of his aircraft. His seven-point harness remained intact. The Gardai secured the scene of the accident, pending the arrival of two Inspectors of Air Accidents. The wreckage was subsequently removed to the AAIU facility at Gormanston, Co. Meath, for technical examination.

The Investigation is ongoing and a Final Report will be published in due course.

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