



Ref: 7650

SOUTH AFRICAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY**ACCIDENT REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Aircraft Registration	ZU-ALX	Date of Accident	26 April 2003	Time of Accident	0545Z
Type of Aircraft	ZENAIR ZODIAC	Type of Operation	Private		
Pilot-in-command Licence Type	Microlight	Age	29 Years	Licence Valid	Yes
PIC Flying Experience	Total Flying Hours	42.50	Hours on Type	36.50	
Last point of departure	Rhino Park Aerodrome				
Next point of intended landing	Ermelo Aerodrome				

Location of the accident site with reference to easily defined geographical points (GPS readings if possible)

Farm Middelplaat near Ermelo S26° 26'.09 " E029° 51' 30.5", Elevation 5680ft.

Meteorological Information Dense fog persisted over the accident area at the time

Number of people on board	1 + 1	No. of people injured	Nil	No. of people killed	1+1
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Synopsis

On 26 April 2003, the pilot was accompanied by a passenger on a private flight from Rhino Park with their intended final destination being Sodwana.

According to available information, they planned to land at Ermelo to uplift fuel, but failed to arrive at Ermelo Aerodrome.

The wreckage of the aircraft was located by farm labourers on the farm Middelplaat, approximately 4nm North-West of Ermelo Aerodrome.

The aircraft impacted the ground on a bearing of 180°M in a steep nose down attitude of 45°. The engine and nose area made a ground scar of approximately 45 metres before the main wreckage came to rest. Both wings were extensively damaged and the cabin and cockpit area were destroyed on impact.

The pilot and the passenger were propelled from the aircraft during the impact and both bodies were found in shallow water in a farm dam approximately 35m beyond the main wreckage.

It was reported that dense fog persisted over the area at the time of the accident. The aircraft was not IFR equipped, being in the LS/1 category, the aircraft was fitted with only limited instrumentation.

The pilot was in possession of a valid Microlight (ML) pilot's licence and was not Instrument rated.

Probable Cause

It appears that the pilot, who was not instrument rated, attempted to remain clear of cloud by descending but lost control in cloud when he continued visual flight into Instrument Meteorological Conditions (IMC) and collided with terrain.