



AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

				Reference:	CA18/2/3/8137	
Aircraft Registration	ZU-ARI	Date of Accident	10 June 2006		Time of Accident	1030Z
Type of Aircraft	Windlass Aquilla		Type of Operation	Commercial		
Pilot-in-command Licence Type	Micro-light		Age	36	Licence Valid	Yes
Pilot-in-command Flying Experience	Total Flying Hours		253.10		Hours on Type	62.4
Last point of departure	Port St Johns (Eastern Cape)					
Next point of intended landing	Port St Johns					
Location of the accident site with reference to easily defined geographical points (GPS readings if possible)						
Crashed into sea at Wild Coast near Dwesa Nature Reserve: (GPS position: S32° 19 956' E028° 48 585')						
Meteorological Information	The weather was fine. The surface wind 330°/10kt and the temperature 18°C					
Number of people on board	1 + 1	No. of people injured	0	No. of people killed	2	
Synopsis						
<p>According to available information, an International French Film Producing Company called "Galatée Films" was documenting the annual sardine migration up the east coast of South Africa and underwater video footage with the documentary focusing largely on the feeding frenzy around the sardine shoals. The Director of Production of Galatée Films concluded that the filming company required the services of a local charter company to organise the different search locations along the coast of South Africa. The French film company received quotations from a South African local boat based viewing charter company called "Blue Wilderness", detailing the services to be rendered to the filming company. Once the services were completed, the filming company was to be invoiced by the local South African charter company.</p> <p>According to information supplied by the coordinator between Blue Wilderness and a British Microlight pilot, the pilot was tasked by Blue Wilderness to fly along the coast and to identify large pods of dolphins and flocks of gannets which would indicate the presence of sardines shoals so that the Filming Company called Galatée Films, could obtain video footage of the activities, underwater.</p> <p>On 06 June 2006, the pilot flew from Light Flight Aerodrome near Cato Ridge and arrived at Port St Johns from where he would start with his tasks. The following day, 07 June 2006, the pilot flew from Port St Johns up the coastline in a north easterly direction to Waterfall Bluff and thereafter from Port St Johns down the coastline in a south westerly direction in search for sardine shoals. On 08 June 2006, the pilot again departed from Port St Johns and flew down the coast in a south westerly direction.</p> <p>On 10 June 2006 at approximately 0545Z, the pilot accompanied by a French passenger who was believed to be a colleague of Galatée Films, departed from Port St Johns after the aircraft was refuelled to a capacity of 50 litres. They flew along the coast in a south westerly direction towards Mazeppa Bay to look for large pods of dolphin and flocks of gannets which would indicate the presence of the sardine shoals.</p> <p>According the coordinator at Port St Johns, who coordinated the fuel required for the flight, the hotel accommodation and food bills for the pilot, the pilot contacted him after flying for 1.50 hours and commented that he still had approximately 30 litres of fuel on board and uplifted 20 litres of fuel at Cobb-Inn near Mazeppa Bay at the Wild Coast due to headwinds. The Production Director of Galatée Films concluded that the pilot forwarded a SMS at (10:33am) 0833Z to a colleague at Port St Johns with the following message: "Having coffee at May Bay. Port St Johns to Coffee Bay empty. Small action at Mazeppa Bay but no Bait Ball, no sardines. Wind down along the coast".</p> <p>The receptionist at Cobb-Inn concluded that the pilot contacted her between 0800Z and 0900Z and requested some fuel, but she advised him that she could only supply him with fuel at 1200Z. The pilot then informed the receptionist that he will organise fuel at Mazeppa Bay but there is, however, no evidence that he uplifted any fuel at Cobb-Inn or Mazeppa Bay.</p> <p>According to a witness who was busy with a sanitation project near the coast at approximately 1030Z, he saw the Microlight flying approximately 600 metres from the coastline over the sea towards Port St Johns when the Microlight suddenly turned and flying towards the beach. He further stated that he heard the engine started running rough where after it eventually failed and the Microlight crashed into the sea. The weather was fine at the time with a light south easterly surface wind blowing.</p>						
Probable Cause						
<p>It cannot be ascertained beyond reasonable doubt whether the pilot experienced a fuel related problem or not and it also could not have been confirmed that additional fuel was uplifted along the coast.</p>						
IARC Date	23 May 2007		Release Date			