

Factual Report

The Investigation Report was written in accordance with para 18 Law Relating to the Investigation into Accidents and Incidents Associated with the Operation of Civil Aircraft stating facts only.

Identification

Type of Occurrence:	Accident
Date:	26 July 2014
Location:	Glider airfield Sultmer Berg, Northeim
Aircraft:	Glider
Manufacturer / Model:	Rolladen Schneider, LS4a
Injuries to Persons:	Pilot fatally injured
Damage:	Aircraft destroyed
Other Damage:	Crop damage
State File Number:	BFU CX010-14

Factual Information

History of the Flight

At approximately 1600 hrs¹, the LS4 was winch launched on runway 18 of the glider airfield Sultmer Berg. According to witness statements immediately after take-off the aircraft adopted a steep climb attitude and began to oscillate around the yaw axis. It reached about 50 to 70 m before it banked over its left wing.

The glider impacted the ground east of the runway and was destroyed.

The pilot suffered fatal injuries.

Personnel Information

The 64-year-old pilot held a pilot's licence for gliders since 8 September 2010, issued by the Royal Netherlands Aeronautical Association (Koninklijke Nederlandse Vereniging voor Luchtvaart, KNNvL). His class 2 medical certificate was valid until 28 February 2015. He had a total flying experience of 258 hours at 509 cycles.

Aircraft Information

The LS4 is a single-seat glider in fibre-composite construction with T-tail configuration and retractable landing gear. The mid-wing airplane with a wingspan of 15 m is equipped with double panel air brakes on the upper wing surface.

Since 29 July 2010, the aircraft had a Dutch certificate of registration. A flight club was the operator.

The aircraft with the Manufacturer's Serial Number (MSN) 4825 was manufactured in 1991. According to the aircraft log book it had a total operating time of 1,501 hours and 1,596 cycles.

¹ All times local, unless otherwise stated.

The wings with the MSN 4801, year of manufacture 1990, had been fitted on 25 August 2010. The entry in the aircraft log book of 1 November 2010 showed a total operating time of the wings of 2,681 hours.

Since then the glider had been operated for approximately 735 hours and 852 cycles.

According to the maintenance organisation a 3,000-hour inspection was conducted on 8 February 2014.

The last Airworthiness Review Certificate (ARC) was issued on 18 October 2013. It was valid until 8 January 2015.

Meteorological Information

The weather station of Kassel/Calden Airport, located about 55 km south of the glider airfield, recorded variable winds of 2 to 5 kt and visibilities of more than 10 km. The barometric air pressure (QNH) was 1,013 hPa and the temperature 24°C.

Aerodrome Information

The glider airfield Sultmer Berg has an aerodrome elevation of 220 m and is located about 1.5 km north of Norheim. The 1,000 m long and 40 m wide grass strip with the orientation 18/36 was certified for gliders and powered gliders.

Flight Recorders

A collision warning system (FLARM) was available for read-out.

The FLARM was not read out because no relevant information was to be expected due to the duration of the flight.

Wreckage and Impact Information

The accident site was located about 40 m east of the 18/36 runway centre line of the glider airfield Sultmer Berg. The glider was lying approximately 340 m from the beginning of runway 36 and at right angle to the take-off direction.

The wings were still attached to the fuselage, which pointed with the cockpit toward the runway.

The cockpit had been severed in front of the wings and the right side had been destroyed up to the middle of the seat bucket. The left side had been destroyed up to the seat bucket.

The trim was found in the position "tail heavy". The retractable landing gear was extended.

The frame of the cockpit canopy was found in the area of the nose. The debris of the cockpit canopy had been scattered around the cockpit area.

The tail boom had been ruptured at approximately the middle and the empennage had tipped forward over the right wing.

The right wing had been severed about 2 m away from the wing tip. The wing tip of the severed part of the wing stuck in the ground and been torn out of position. It was kept in place by the water bags and the control rods. The right aileron had also been severed at the same place. The severed part of the aileron was lying behind the wing. The speed brake of the right wing was extended.

Outward appearances showed the left wing was almost undamaged. The wing leading edge showed traces of ground impact. The area of the wing root was delaminated.

The tail boom, including the control rod of the empennage, had ruptured. The other connections with the controls, the rods, and control surfaces were intact.

No technical faults were found in the glider controls.



Accident site

Photo: BFU

Investigator in charge: Stefan Maser

Field investigation: Rene Sobolewski, Stefan Maser

Braunschweig 15 June 2017

This investigation was conducted in accordance with the regulation (EU) No. 996/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 on the investigation and prevention of accidents and incidents in civil aviation and the Federal German Law relating to the investigation of accidents and incidents associated with the operation of civil aircraft (*Flugunfall-Untersuchungs-Gesetz - FIUUG*) of 26 August 1998.

The sole objective of the investigation is to prevent future accidents and incidents. The investigation does not seek to ascertain blame or apportion legal liability for any claims that may arise.

This document is a translation of the German Investigation Report. Although every effort was made for the translation to be accurate, in the event of any discrepancies the original German document is the authentic version.

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Bundesstelle für
Flugunfalluntersuchung

Hermann-Blenk-Str. 16
38108 Braunschweig

Phone +49 531 35 48 - 0
Fax +49 531 35 48 - 246

Mail box@bfu-web.de
Internet www.bfu-web.de