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COMISIÓN DE
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AVIACIÓN **C**IVIL

Report A-028/2018

Accident involving a
SCHLEICHER ASK-13,
registration EC-LPT, at the
aerodrome of Santo Tomé del
Puerto (Segovia) on 7 July
2018



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SUBSECRETARÍA

COMISIÓN DE INVESTIGACIÓN
DE ACCIDENTES E INCIDENTES
DE AVIACIÓN CIVIL

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Foreword

This report is a technical document that reflects the point of view of the Civil Aviation Accident and Incident Investigation Commission (CIAIAC) regarding the circumstances of the accident object of the investigation, and its probable causes and consequences.

In accordance with the provisions in Article 5.4.1 of Annex 13 of the International Civil Aviation Convention; and with articles 5.5 of Regulation (UE) n° 996/2010, of the European Parliament and the Council, of 20 October 2010; Article 15 of Law 21/2003 on Air Safety and articles 1., 4. and 21.2 of Regulation 389/1998, this investigation is exclusively of a technical nature, and its objective is the prevention of future civil aviation accidents and incidents by issuing, if necessary, safety recommendations to prevent from their reoccurrence. The investigation is not pointed to establish blame or liability whatsoever, and it's not prejudging the possible decision taken by the judicial authorities. Therefore, and according to above norms and regulations, the investigation was carried out using procedures not necessarily subject to the guarantees and rights usually used for the evidences in a judicial process.

Consequently, any use of this report for purposes other than that of preventing future accidents may lead to erroneous conclusions or interpretations.

This report was originally issued in Spanish. This English translation is provided for information purposes only.

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Abbreviations

° ' "	Sexagesimal degrees, minutes and seconds
AESA	National Aviation Safety Agency
h	Hours
kg	Kilograms
km	Kilometers
kt	Knots
L	Left
LETP	Designator for the aerodrome of Santo Tomé del Puerto
m	Meters
N	North
R	Right
SPL	Sailplane pilot license
RACE	Royal Air Club of Spain
VFR	Visual flight rules
W	West

Synopsis

Owner and Operator:	Loreto Sailplane Club
Aircraft:	SCHLEICHER ASK-13, registration EC-LPT
Date and time of accident:	7 July 2018 at 15:20 (local time ¹)
Site of accident:	Aerodrome of Santo Tomé del Puerto (Segovia)
Persons on board:	Two (uninjured)
Flight rules:	VFR
Type of flight:	General aviation. Private. Landing. Final approach.
Date of approval:	18 December 2018

Summary of event:

On Saturday, 7 July, a SCHLEICHER ASK-13 sailplane, registration EC-LPT, was making the final approach to runway 15 at the aerodrome of Santo Tomé del Puerto (Segovia) with two persons on board.

During the final approach, the sailplane landed on the ground before it reached the runway.

Neither occupant was injured. The aircraft sustained significant damage.

The investigation has determined that the accident was caused by an off-field landing on unprepared terrain due to not reaching the threshold of runway 15, where it was attempting to land.

¹ Unless otherwise specified, all times in this report are local. To obtain UTC, subtract one hour from local time.

1. FACTUAL INFORMATION

1.1. History of the flight

On Saturday, 7 July 2018, a SCHLEICHER ASK-13 glider, registration EC-LPT, was towed into the air from runway 15 at the Santo Tomé del Puerto (Segovia) with two persons on board.

The pilot reported that during the climb, they made a right turn, reaching a point some 2 km northwest of the field at an elevation of 250 m.

Noticing there was a thermal updraft of about 5 kt, he decided to release the tow cable so as to enter the updraft and continue climbing unaided.

In his statement, the pilot said he was unable to use the updraft and tried to find another updraft, but he had a headwind, so he gave up and decided to return to the field.

He made the approach to runway 15 shortly after the airplane that had towed him. He stated that the leeward downdrafts at this runway are usually strong, which made him descend rapidly. He lowered the nose of the airplane to gain speed and counteract the downdraft, but he was unable to reach the runway, landing just before it.

When he was at an altitude of about 1 m, the right wing struck a small oak tree and the airplane landed sideways, resting on its main gear, with the left wingtip touching the ground.

The airplane stopped approximately 5 m after contacting the ground, coming to rest at a 90° angle with respect to the runway centerline.

The occupants were uninjured and exited the aircraft under their own power.

The aircraft sustained damage to its left wing.

1.2. Injuries to persons

The pilot and passenger were not injured.

1.3. Damage to aircraft

The aircraft sustained minor damage.

1.4. Other damage

There was no other damage..

1.5. Personnel information

The pilot, 62, had a sailplane pilot license (SPL) issued by Spain's National Aviation Safety Agency (AESA) on 25 January 1992.

The license was valid, as was the class-2 medical certificate, until 12 September 2018. He had a total of 233 flight hours, of which 215 had been as the pilot in command and 41 had been on the type.

1.6. Aircraft information

The SCHLEICHER ASK-13, registration EC-LPT, was owned by the Loreto Sailplane Club. Its serial number was 13538 and it had been manufactured in the fall of 1976. It had a normal category certificate of airworthiness that was valid until 10 July 2019.

At the time of the accident, the aircraft had 5,651 flight hours and 1,855 landings. Its most recent maintenance inspection, a 50-h check, had been on 20 April with 3,966 flight hours.

1.7. Meteorological information

The data collected indicate that there were no significant weather phenomena in the area of the accident.

1.8. Aids to navigation

The flight was conducted under visual flight rules (VFR).

1.9. Communications

Not applicable to this event.

1.10. Aerodrome information

The aerodrome of Santo Tomé del Puerto (Segovia) is located northwest of the town by the same name (Segovia).

Its reference point is at coordinates $41^{\circ} 11' 57.65''$ N - $3^{\circ} 35' 13.05''$ W and an elevation of 1,100 m.

It has three runways: a 700-m long asphalt runway identified as 30R/12L; a 700-m long dirt runway, parallel to the first; and a third identified as 33/15, also with a dirt surface and 1,000 m long.

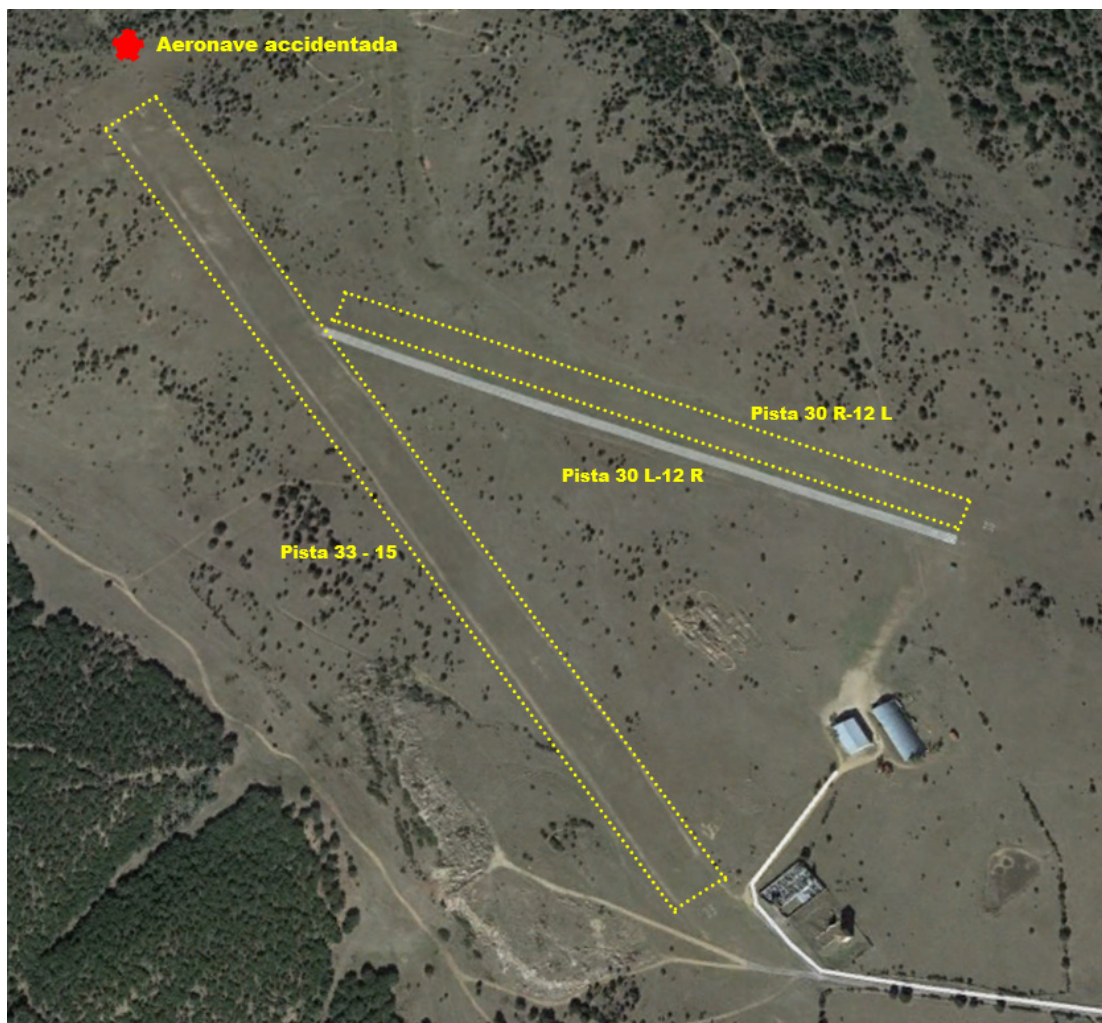


Figure 1. Aerial view of the aerodrome

1.11. Flight recorders

The aircraft was not equipped with flight recorders as this was not required by law.

1.12. Wreckage and impact information

Only the left wing was damaged by the impact. This wing had a crack on its lower surface, close to the area with the registration marking. Both the upper and lower surfaces of its wingtip were also visibly damaged, though more so on the upper surface.



Figure 2. Photograph of the final position of the aircraft



Figure 3. Damage to left wing

1.13. Medical and pathological information

Not applicable to this event.

1.14. Fire

There was no fire..

1.15. Survival aspects

Not applicable.

1.16. Tests and research

No special tests or research were required.

1.17. Organizational and management information

The Loreto Flight Club, which owned the aircraft and of which the pilot was a member, is a non-profit company that organizes sports and competition flying activities. It is a member of the Royal Air Club of Spain (RACE) and it is represented in the Royal Spanish Aeronautical Federation, specifically in the National Sailplane Technical Committee, which is the body that manages competitive flying in Spain.

In addition to the accident aircraft, the club has a Pawnee 260 (EC-BSJ) tow airplane, a Scheibe SF-28 Tandem Falke powered glider (EC-DHS) and two single-seat airplanes, a GORB Astir CS 102 (EC-FPX) and a GORB Astir CS 77 (EC-HCI).

1.18. Additional information

Not applicable.

1.19. Useful or effective investigation techniques

No special investigation techniques were required.

2. ANALYSIS

Based on the weather information recorded at the three closest stations, the wind in the area was from the southeast, and the wind speed was not high. The temperature was also not excessively high, but the time of day and year when the flight was made were suited to the presence of updrafts.

The pilot was unable to climb as he wanted after releasing the tow cable, and he decided to return to the field with the intention of landing on runway 15. At that point, he was at an altitude of 250 m and 2 km away from the airfield.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1. Findings

- The aircraft was towed into the air from the aerodrome of Santo Tomé del Puerto.
- On board were the pilot and one passenger.
- The aircraft's documentation was valid.
- The pilot had a valid license and medical certificate.
- When 2 km away from the field, at an altitude of 250 m, the pilot released the tow cable.
- Unable to find any updrafts, he returned to the field.
- During the landing, the right wing impacted a shrub.

3.2. Causes/Contributing factors

The accident was caused by an off-field landing on unprepared terrain when the pilot was unable to reach the threshold of runway 15, where he was attempting to land

4. SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

None.