



Ref: 7867

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

Aircraft Registration	ZS-LEG	Date of Accident	7 October 2004	Time of Accident	1735Z
Type of Aircraft	PZL M18- DROMADER		Type of Operation	Fire Fighting	
Pilot-in-command Licence Type	Commercial	Age	38	Licence Valid	Yes
Pilot-in-command Flying Experience	Total Flying Hours	3800		Hours on Type	120
Last point of departure	Red Hill Firefighting Runway				
Next point of intended landing	Nelspruit Aerodrome				

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

Near Kaapsehoop Mountain. (GPS S25.11804 E30.36427)

Meteorological Information Temperature: 30°C. Wind: Westerly/8-10kts. Visibility: 10km

Number of people on board	1	No. of people injured	1	No. of people killed	0
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Synopsis

After a fire fighting operation in the Oshoek area, and on the flight back to Nelspruit Aerodrome, the pilot experienced a loss of power and the engine failed. The pilot attempted to land on top of the mountain but the aircraft did not come to rest soon enough and fell down the cliff. The aircraft was restricted from further going down the mountain by the trees and the pilot managed to pull himself out of the aircraft and waited on the ledge until he was rescued.

The aircraft sustained damage to the right and left hand wing, and fuselage. The engine and propeller separated from the aircraft. The pilot sustained injuries to his leg and arm.

There were no mechanical defects found on the aircraft. The engine was subjected to a shock-load inspection and fitted to another aircraft without any defects reported.

The pilot deviated from the flight-path; in doing so he stretched the flight and allowed the aircraft to run out of fuel. The forced landing on top of the mountain was unsuccessful when the aircraft did not stop soon enough and it fell down the cliff.

The last MPI prior to the accident was certified on 01 July 2004, at 3203.4 airframe hours and All the Airworthiness Directives (AD) were complied with and there were no Service Bulletins (SB) to be complied with. The aircraft was operated for a further 30.5 hours since the MPI was certified.

The Operator was in possession of a valid Air Operating Certificate (AOC) which was to expire in August 2005.

Probable Cause

The pilot deviated from the flight path; in doing so he over stretched the flight and allowed the aircraft to run out of fuel. The forced landing attempt on top of the mountain failed when the aircraft did not stop soon enough and it fell down the cliff.