

ACCIDENT

Involving the glider registered I-DLEA

Event:	Loss of control, collision with terrain.
Probable cause:	Manoeuvres at low speed and height in highly turbulent atmosphere.

Consequences and damage:	Pilot killed, glider destroyed.
Type of aircraft:	Glasflügel H201B Standard Libelle glider.
Date and time:	Saturday 24 June 2000 at 13 h 30.
Owner:	Private.
Place:	Canjuers (83).
Type of flight:	Circuit.
Persons on board:	Pilot.
Licenses and experience:	Pilot, 59, VV issued by Italy in 1983, 1200 flying hours, of which 200 on type and 30 in the previous 3 months.
Meteorological conditions:	Estimated at the site: convergence of an east-south-east sea breeze at 10 kt and an airflow from the west, creating strong turbulence, CAVOK.

Circumstances

After being towed for 7 minutes, the pilot released at an altitude of 1100 metres. The pilot of the tow aircraft saw the glider turn left towards the slope. The glider then flew for less than 15 minutes before crashing into the top of the slope of Mount Seillans.

The wreckage was found by the pilot of an aircraft who raised the alarm. The wreckage was not widely dispersed. Examination showed that the glider struck the terrain very near the summit at a relatively high speed while turning right.

Several statements from pilots flying at the time of the accident mention significant but irregular updraughts which were difficult to centre on.

The glider remained in the air for a short time. The pilot certainly tried to use the updraughts by flying close to the south-west slope of Mount Seillans, where he had started out.

The position of the wreckage shows that the pilot turned right near the summit. He probably made the turn at a too low speed which, in association with the turbulence, could have caused a dissymmetrical stall and a loss of control, leading to a collision with the nearby terrain.



