

Bay Post

Plane crash: Anomalies found in plane construction

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INVESTIGATIONS surrounding the cause of the Barlings Beach plane crash that killed two men earlier this month are continuing.

Recreational Aviation Australia president Michael Monck said the crash investigation had uncovered some "anomalies" in the craft which might have contributed to the crash.

"So far the case is ongoing but we have discovered a couple of anomalies that might have existed on the plane," he said.

"These could have contributed to the crash but we are in the early stages of the investigation and it is still uncertain."

Mr Monck said the investigation team was ruling out any interference by custom additions to the plane.

"We have a number of categories of planes but basically there are two main categories; those that are amateur built and those that are factory built," he said.

"Amateur built aircrafts, like this one, are built from scratch and when they are built like this we need to determine what further construction took place."

Mr Monck said the Morgan Sierra 200 plane was found in a pretty bad condition.

"The plane crash investigation is ongoing and so we are ruling certain scenarios," he said.

"During the investigation we can not confirm anything at all but basically we will know with a high degree of certainty what was likely to cause the crash.

"The only thing that we are certain of at this stage is the crash was not due to pilot error."

The ultra-light plane crashed into the ocean more than a kilometre off Barlings Beach after leaving Moruya Airport around noon on Sunday, July 6.

The crash killed both occupants, experienced flight instructor Graham White and the plane's owner Ralph Buchanan.

The body of Mr White was recovered on the day of the crash while Mr Buchanan's body was later found in the wreckage.

The salvage effort spanned eight days, leaving much of the plane and electronic equipment exposed under water.

Mr Monck said the investigation was yet to uncover information on electronic equipment from salvage to determine if the length of time it was underwater had destroyed any of that information.

"It is still too early to determine if we will be able to retrieve that information," he said.

"In an investigation like this we send all those electronic parts, like GPS tracker off to specialists.

"Essentially, that electronic equipment has been sent to different places around the country."

Mr Monck said the freak crash had rocked the aviation community, which prides itself on safety standards.

"One thing that we need to remember is that there are more than 3500 recreational aircrafts flying across this country, many of those are amateur built just like this," he said.

"Our safety record as a sport is much better than that of general aircrafts and more people die every year falling out of bed than they do in a recreational aircraft.

"I think because deaths in our sport are so few-and-far between they tend to rock the aviation community deeply."

Extracted from:

<http://www.batemansbaypost.com.au/story/2434449/plane-crash-anomalies-found-in-plane-construction>

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