

Plane crashes near airfield in Gold Coast suburb

The Courier-Mail October 12, 2014 7:48PM

AN experienced pilot was lucky to escape with his life after a horrific light plane crash in bushland near Coombabah on the Gold Coast on Sunday.

Pilot Ian Mewett, 65, of Paradise Point had only just taken off from the runway of the Southport Aerodrome when the engine of his Murphy Moose aircraft suddenly cut out.

As the plane began descending, witnesses said Mr Mewett attempted to find a patch of open land to make an emergency landing but went down in heavy scrub, 100m from Rain Tree Glen Drive.

“Just after he took off at 200 feet he lost power,” Southport Flying Club member Chris Leon said.

“He was looking to make a landing on the road but didn’t make it.

“Nobody could find the wreckage so I got back in my plane and had to fly around until I found it.”

Witnesses said the plane seemed to “splutter” before it crashed into heavily wooded bushland at the Coombabah Lakes environmental reserve.

The plane clipped several trees before it ploughed nose first into the ground.

Mr Mewett’s wife and son rushed to the scene and offered emotional support as firefighters battled to free him from the wreck.

Paramedics stabilised the injured pilot as emergency workers took more than 60 minutes to free him from the mangled wreck.

He was placed on a stretcher before emergency workers carried him more than 100 metres through bushland.

Ambulance transported the pilot to Gold Coast University Hospital where he remains in a serious but stable condition with lacerations to his legs.

A longtime member of the Southport Flying Club said the 10-year-old aircraft was built by a group of engineers and Mr Mewett.

He said the conditions were “perfect for flying” and believes it was an engine problem that caused the accident.

“The plane has been around for a number of years (and) they are as tough as they come,” the member said.

“This is the first light plane crash I have seen.”

Regional District Officer Inspector Gary Brown said Mr Mewett was breathing and talking to medical officers at the scene.

“He has a badly injured left leg and possibly a broken right arm,” Insp Brown said.

“There were a number of witnesses that we will speak to as we investigate the matter.”

Extracted from:

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/plane-crashes-near-airfield-in-gold-coast-suburb/story-fnihsrf2-1227087933439?nk=ceb1e9505e672b37c2fb628e36e9cbaa>

On 13/10/14 at 06:18:07