

Pilot's lucky escape after light aircraft flips on airstrip near Sandy Beach

October 23, 2015 4:09pm



A pilot has sustained numerous injuries after his small aircraft crashed on landing at a private grassy airstrip. Picture: Frank Redward

AN elderly pilot is lucky to be alive after a witness saw his aircraft crash at an unmanned airstrip in bushland in northern NSW.

The 76-year-old male pilot had attempted to land a light aircraft at a private airstrip on Johnsons Rd near Sandy Beach outside Coffs Harbour when a strong gust of wind caught the plane just before 2pm.

Ron Harris, who lives on a nearby property, had been watching helicopters passing over when he saw the plane come in to land.

After three attempts, Mr Harris said the aircraft's nose hit the ground and the plane left the airstrip and flipped on to its roof.

"I ran down from my front door to see if I could offer any assistance and he was trapped under the plane, there was heaps of blood," he told photographer Frank Redward.

"It's not something you expect to happen on a Friday afternoon, I just tried to do whatever I could to help him out."



Witnesses say the aircraft made three attempts land but crashed in strong winds. Picture: Frank Redward *Source:Supplied*

He said if hadn't witnessed the accident, the pilot may not have been found for hours as the airstrip was fairly remote and unmanned.

"If we weren't home and the neighbours weren't home, he could have been there all day.

"He was in a really bad way, there was a lot of blood loss, I had to take my shirt off and basically try to stem the blood from underneath his head."

Paramedics treated the pilot at the scene and he was taken to Coffs Harbour Health Campus with head, chest and leg injuries. He was the sole occupant in the plane.

The light aircraft had been travelling from Lismore.

Fire & Rescue NSW and Coffs Harbour Police were also notified and responded to the scene.

Extracted from:

<http://www.news.com.au/national/nsw-act/pilots-lucky-escape-after-light-aircraft-flips-on-airstrip-near-sandy-beach/story-fnii5s3x-1227580260842>

On 24/10/15 at 06:54:13