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# One dead after glider 'fell out of the sky' on Queensland border

Shae McDonald

**An experienced Victorian glider pilot with 20 years experience has died after his glider spiralled to the ground this afternoon and crashed south of Goondiwindi, just over the New South Wales border.**

Steve Scott, a reporting officer at Goondiwindi Airport, said he had spoken to a pilot who witnessed the crash and had said the glider "just looked like it fell out of the sky".



Emergency services rushed to the scene of a glider crash near Goondiwindi. *Photo: IAN JONES*

"They said it just looked like (the glider) fell out of the sky, it wasn't landing or taking off," he said.

Chris Thorpe, the lead investigator from the Gliding Federation of Australia, said the glider with the male pilot, was seen spiralling out of control towards the ground about 1.20pm.



A Jonkers JS-1 glider, the same model as the glider which has crashed south of Goondiwindi on Monday afternoon. *Photo: Tony Moore*

The Jonker JS-1 glider spiralled and crashed on a rural property near Boggabilla just over the border in northern New South Wales, just south of Goodniwindi Airport, Mr Thorpe said.

“The glider was observed to spiral towards the ground and it has hit the ground and the occupant – the pilot – was deceased,” he said on Monday afternoon.

“We don’t know the reason for that, but we are working closely with the New South Wales police force,” he said. He said the glider crashed near Boggabilla and police and ambulance crews had recently arrived.

Mr Thorpe said the glider began to spiral about six minutes into the flight.

The experienced pilot was competing in the Club and Sports Class of the National Gliding Championships which are being held at Goondiwindi’s Airport.

“There are competitors from all over Australia and the pilot who has sadly died was from Victoria,” Mr Thorpe said.

“He was a friend, but I can’t tell you his name at the minute because I’m unsure if his wife has been advised just yet,” he said.

“I’ve known him for about 30 years. He was a very experienced glider pilot and had been flying in competitions for at least the past two decades.

“We are very close in the gliding community, so all our thoughts are with family and friends.”

“We will all be supporting each other this time.”

Mr Thorpe said it was simply too early to speculate how the crash occurred.

“It will be at least two months before we know if it was a medical issue. We don’t know if it was an issue with his aircraft.

“Right now we just don’t know.”

Mr Thorpe said investigators will look at the height that the glider began to spiral.

“It might be that he just could not recover it in time,” he said.

Mr Thorpe said a detailed investigation of the glider would begin immediately while medical records were checked.

Police also investigate fatal glider accidents.

The 37th National Gliding Championship is being held at Goondiwindi Airport. It started on Sunday and is scheduled to run until October 19.

Extracted from:

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