

FAA INSPECTOR STATEMENT:

ON JUNE 4, 2017, AT 0824 MST, AN EXCALIBUR, N78DZ, REGISTERED TO WILLIAM TELFAIR, WAS IN CRUISE FLIGHT WHEN THE AIRCRAFT VIOLENTLY BEGAN PITCHING FORWARD AND AFT. THE AIRCRAFT MADE AN EMERGENCY LANDING IN A FIELD. VISUAL METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS PREVAILED AT THE TIME. THE AIRCRAFT SUSTAINED SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE. THE PILOT WAS NOT INJURED. THE FLIGHT ORIGINATED FROM DOUBLE EAGLE AIRPORT, ALBUQUERQUE, NM.

THE OWNER WAS PILOTING THE AIRCRAFT. HE STATED WHILE FLYING AT 6800 FEET IN CRUISE, THE CONTROL STICK STARTED SLAMMING FORE AND AFT TO THE LIMITS AND THE NOSE BEGAN PITCHING UP AND DOWN. THE AIRCRAFT BEGAN BUFFETING VIOLENTLY AS IF WAS GOING TO COME APART. HE STATED HE HAD BEEN FLYING FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR. HE DECLARED AN EMERGENCY AND PUT THE AIRCRAFT DOWN IN A SEMI BROKEN TERRAIN TYPE OF FIELD. THE NOSE GEAR AND LEFT MAIN GEAR SHEARED OFF THE AIRCRAFT UPON GROUND IMPACT. THE AIRCRAFT SLID ALONG THE GROUND FOR APPROXIMATELY 300 FEET. THE BELLY OF THE FUSELAGE SUSTAINED SEVERE DAMAGE. THE RIGHT ELEVATOR WAS FOUND HANGING DOWN. THE CONTROL ROD ATTACHED TO THE RIGHT ELEVATOR WAS BROKEN IN THE CENTER. THE AFT PORTION OF THE CONTROL ROD WAS SLIGHTLY BENT WHERE IT HAD DUG INTO THE GROUND ON LANDING. THE CONTROL ROD IS A 1/2 INCH ALUMINUM TUBE THAT IS FACTORY SUPPLIED WITH THE AIRCRAFT KIT.

IT IS THE OPINION OF THIS INSPECTOR THAT THE AIRWORTHINESS OF THE CONTROL ROD IS IN QUESTION. IT IS POSSIBLE THE CONTROL ROD MAY HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY BENT AND EVENTUALLY WEAKENED AT THAT POINT WHERE IT BROKE IN FLIGHT CAUSING THE ELEVATOR FLUTTER AND LOSS OF CONTROL.