

Starr Blum  
Air Safety Investigator  
Western Pacific Region

**Date:** May 18, 2023

**Subject:** WRP23LA186

**Contact:** Mark Ceccarelli

Mr. Ceccarelli was in the hospital and on pain medications, his son who is a lawyer was present during the conversation. He explained the landing gear advisory system on the Wipaire 2100A floats activate at 400 ft above ground level. At about 50 ft, if there is a terrain mismatch an aural "check gear" warning would sound. On approach the gear position panel had 4 blue lights illuminated, which corresponded with all 4-gear are in the up position for a water landing. However, when the "CHECK GEAR" warning alerted him 2-3 ft above the water, he could not verify the left nose wheel was up, and he elected to follow Wipaire's guidance and training to go-around.

In a follow-up conversation on August 1, 2023, Mr. Ceccarelli stated the purpose of the flight was to fine tune the engine idle setting on a newer carburetor installed in the airplane. His passenger-rated pilot had been his airplane mechanic for many years. At American Lake which is nearby the winds were calm and he performed a glassy-water landing. After departing he overflew Lake Steilacoom to observe the water and flags along the lake perimeter. He had radioed McChord Field Airport (Joint Base McChord) and the tower reported the winds were calm. He did not observe any wind and made the approach from the north over his house at 70 knots and flaps 30 degrees. His touchdown aim point was about midway along a waterski slalom course marked by buoys. After the "CHECK GEAR" advisory he flew 60 kts which is the airplanes best angle of climb. He admitted in hindsight approaching from the bridge to allow a greater water distance available would have been a better decision. He said they almost made it, he believed they only needed 10-15 ft more to clear the trees.