

Michael Hicks  
Air Safety Investigator  
OAS-WPR

**Date:** July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 @1515PDT

**Subject:** WPR23LA255

**Contact:** Pilot-in-command (PIC) John T. Martens

The following is a synopsis of the communication as relayed to the NTSB Investigator-in-charge, by the PIC, following the inflight separation of the Russian manufactured experimental motor glider (N40233).

The PIC conveyed the following:

The motor glider had not flown the year prior to the purchase. If everything goes right, the glider can be assembled in five minutes. The left spar fits through the forward carriage, and the right wing spar fits in through the aft carriage. A 1-inch diameter steal pin connects the wings through the fuselage. Turn the moon shaped clevis and the pin tightens the spars together. He had a little trouble connecting the left wing during assembly the day of the accident. He had assembled the motor glider twice before the day of the accident, and he thought that glider may have had an improper fit of the brass bushings, creating vibration during flight. The stall characteristics in this motor glider were more rapid than previous gliders he had flown. The parachute was packed in 2016. The parachute is to be repacked every six months. The previous owner only used the parachute as a ballast.  $V_{ne}$  when maneuvering is 86 kts, and  $V_{ne}$  119 kts when straight and level. Intentional spins are prohibited.

He purchased the motor glider the end of March 2023. This was the first flight since the purchase. A condition inspection was completed June 2023. The flight was conducted so that he could get a feel for the motor glider, and to accomplish requirements set by the insurance company. After a series of towed high-speed taxis, he was towed to 3,100 ft msl, released, and he made a right turn to the southeast. The

motor glider's airspeed was about 50 knots, and he performed three stall maneuvers (straight, left, right).

The next task he accomplished was the deployment and subsequent retraction of the engine. He normally keeps his right hand on the control stick. All was normal, the motor glider's altitude was about 2,500 ft msl, field elevation was 210 ft, and he initiated a right turn toward the southeast, which turned into a stall. The glider may have been going too slow and immediately turned into a stall/spin to the right. He neutralized the control stick and applied left rudder to recover. It was in a very tight spiral, he felt like the glider was diving and after about three rotations, he leveled the wings and tried to apply aft back pressure. The glider's speed had increased, a significant and consistent vibration was felt, and a "bang" noise ensued when the right wing broke off the glider. He exited the glider under 500 ft agl, deployed the parachute, and it was about ten seconds before he contacted the ground.

PIC Total Flight Experience: 220 Hrs.

PIC Glider Total Flight Experience: 138 Hrs.

NOTHING FOLLOWS