

AAIB Report: G-DEJH, Structural failure of glider tail assembly, Cross Fell, Pennines, Cumbria

News story

A pilot was flying low behind the ridge at Cross Fell in the Pennines when the tail section of the glider began to oscillate rapidly and broke away from the glider. The glider, an SB-5E, pitched nose down and was heavily disrupted when it struck the surface, 7 Aug 2019.



The 15 year old pilot, who was part of a private group visiting a gliding club near Penrith, was flying low behind the ridge at Cross Fell in the Pennines when the tail section of the glider began to oscillate rapidly before breaking away from the glider. The glider, an SB-5E, pitched nose down and was heavily disrupted when it struck the surface. The pilot was seriously injured.

The cause of the failure was flutter (an oscillation of a structure under the interaction of aerodynamic and aeroelastic forces) which was driven by the ruddervators. It was likely to have occurred when the glider was flying between the rough air speed limit and the maximum operating speed.

A number of safety actions have been taken to improve the supervision of young glider pilots, maintenance of training records and the introduction of a national syllabus for hill soaring (ridge flying).

[Read the report.](#)

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