



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Brian C. Rayner
Senior Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

November 26, 2019

Subject: ERA18FA238 Morrisville, Vermont
Aircraft: Schweizer SGS 232 Glider
Name: Kyle Schweizer – President – K&L Soaring LLC

Mr. Schweizer was the president of K&L Soaring, the glider type-certificate holder. Over the course of the investigation, Mr. Schweizer provided information with regard to the accident glider (N17970) and to its sister ship (N9916J). K&L Soaring performed an annual inspection on N9916J for the accident pilot, who was the owner of both gliders.

According to Mr. Schweizer, lap belts and shoulder harnesses were required at all pilot and passenger seating positions. In May 2018, when the pilot/owner/operator brought an identical Schweizer SGS 2-32 (N9916J) for an annual inspection, he was advised that installation of the proper seat belts and shoulder harnesses was required in the glider before K&L Soaring would complete the annual inspection and sign it off.

The pilot/owner/operator agreed to the installation and purchased an additional set of seat belts and shoulder harnesses for the accident glider. He picked up the harnesses along with N9916J on June 27, 2018.

During an email exchange, Mr. Schweizer was asked about the harness configurations in the SGS 232 Glider. He explained:

The default configuration for the 2-32 was a single person in front and a single person in back, but in that default configuration you still had a lapbelt and shoulder harness for both people. Then as an option you should add extra mounting points for (2) passengers in the rear of the aircraft.

When you went to the (2) passenger setup you had 3 shoulder harnesses and (2) lapbelts in the rear seat. If you were flying (2) people they used the outer (2) shoulder harnesses so they lined up with your neck. If you had (1) person in the back you used the middle harness that lined up with your neck.

With that said the no shoulder harnesses should have been caught on the annual inspections every year for the past 15 or so. In my opinion the person doing the annual inspection is just as culpable as [the owner]. It clearly says in the annual/100hr checklist that there needs to be a shoulder harness/lapbelt and they need to be checked. There is also a whole section in AC43.13-1B about belt/shoulder harness installation that clearly was not followed for annual inspection.

According to Mr. Schweizer, the installation of the proper harnesses required between 1-2 hours of labor.