
From: Richard Thompson
Sent: Monday, 9 November 2009 09:13
To: ralph@xxxx.com.au
Subject: Wind Turbines

Hi Ralph,

Sorry about the delay in getting this to you. Have been very busy with organizing our annual open day at our airport.

Got your text as well so here is my Email address. Would be a pleasure to peruse your submission.

In September of 2008 I and a friend were flying from Pasco WA (KPSC) to 1W1 Grove Field WA. In an Aero Commander 680E.

Whilst flying along the Columbia River my friend who is 20K + Ag pilot asked me if I knew anything about wind turbines as there were a lot of them along the ridges near the river.

Answering negative he had me position the aircraft in a shallow dive towards the river aiming to pass behind the last turbine in a row. Thus as I was to find out allowed me an escape route.

Passing behind the turbine about a third of the diameter from the top and about 100mts behind it, the aircraft did the following. Dropped instantly about 100 ft, coming out near the bottom of the diameter. Felt very much like a bad air pocket, also there was a feeling of a total lack of control authority. The only thing that stopped the 7000lb aircraft doing about 160 kts from contacting the ground was the momentum and the fact that the ground dropped away to the river. I estimated the prevailing wind to have been in the region of about 30kts at the time.

Had I been in a lighter less powerful aircraft I believe that I would have impacted the ground. As a result a health fear of getting near these wind turbine has developed.

Another thing I have noticed is that at night the red warning lights on them flash intermittently across the rows. It is actually quite disorientating as you don't actually know where all of them are all the time. This is very dangerous in an area where aircraft are on descent into an airport or approaching one at low level.

Therefore from personal experience I Believe that having ant of these turbines near an airport is particularly dangerous. Having any sited near the circuit area would be very dangerous.

Any aircraft in the circuit would be operating in the downwind area behind the turbines. At a critical and most dangerous phase of flight, low airspeed and near to the ground.

Hope this helps. Send it to anyone you want to.

Cheers
Richard