

## ICON founder dies in wingsuit accident

August 21, 2025



Hawkins co-founded ICON Aircraft, which manufactures the amphibious LSA.

Kirk Hawkins, a former US Air Force pilot who co-founded ICON Aircraft, died Aug. 19, 2025, in a wingsuit accident in the Swiss Alps.

According to local police, who are investigating the accident, Hawkins jumped out of the helicopter with three other wingsuit divers before crashing to the ground near Schüssellouwinegraben.

His death was announced on LinkedIn by Steen Strand, who co-founded ICON Aircraft with Hawkins in 2006. "Kirk was the most extraordinary person I've ever known, or ever will know. He started life with nothing and climbed to the top — Clemson, Stanford, the Air Force (F-16s), then Stanford again for business school," Strand said in the post. "At ICON, he led the charge to create the most badass recreational aircraft in history. His new startup was poised to transform the world again."

Hawkins was forced out as CEO of ICON Aircraft in November 2018. The company is now owned by the ShangGong Group based in Shanghai, China, which also recently purchased Flight Design.

In his LinkedIn post, Strand noted that recently Hawkins "became more philosophical and emotional, always pushing to evolve into a better version of himself. And in the end, he went out as he lived — doing something thrilling that he loved. I just wish it happened 30 years later."