

No: 9/91

Ref: EW/G91/07/23

Category: 1b

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-23-250 Aztec, G-BCBM

No & Type of Engines: 2 Lycoming IO-540-C4B5 piston engines

Year of Manufacture: 1965

Date & Time (UTC): 14 July 1991 at 1140 hrs

Location: Old Buckenham airfield, Norfolk

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 3

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Both propellers and both engines were damaged by ground impact, as were the undercarriage doors and underskin.

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 43 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 261 hours (of which 92 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot had planned a flight from Old Buckenham airfield to Snetterton with passengers on board. As some of the passengers failed to turn up for the flight he took off without them. Just after the aircraft became airborne the pilot saw the missing passengers arriving at the airfield. He decided to fly a circuit, land and pick them up. The pilot reported that as he had only just taken off he was under the impression that he had not retracted the undercarriage and therefore did not attempt to make a selection to the "Down" position prior to landing. He landed with the undercarriage retracted, causing damage to both propellers, both engines and to the undercarriage doors and underskin to the extent that the aircraft was considered to be beyond economic repair. There was no fire.

The pilot did not recall having heard the audible warning horn during the final approach and neither did he remember having checked the undercarriage indicator lights prior to landing. On his return to the aircraft after the evacuation the pilot noted that the undercarriage lever was in the "Down" position but felt it could have been knocked to that position during the evacuation from the aircraft. A subsequent technical inspection found that the undercarriage warning horn only worked intermittently.