

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-32R-300 Lance, G-DTCP	
No & type of Engines:	1 Lycoming IO-540-K1G5D piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1977	
Date & Time (UTC):	25 August 2006 at 1411 hrs	
Location:	Cranfield Airport, Bedfordshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passenger(s) - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passenger(s) - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Nosewheel collapse, propeller damaged, engine shockloaded and engine exhaust stubs crushed	
Commander's Licence:	Air Transport Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	51 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	26,000 hours (of which 160 were on type) Last 90 days - 250 hours Last 28 days - 80 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

During taxi the GPS assembly fell from the right instrument panel. The commander attempted to catch the unit, with the aircraft still in motion. Whilst the commander was distracted the aircraft departed the taxiway, causing the aircraft to sink into a 'french' drain, leading to the collapse of the nosewheel.

History of the flight

The commander's intention was to fly a private flight from Cranfield to Farnborough. The commander taxied the aircraft toward holding point A1 for Runway 21. As he passed the crossing for Runway 18, the GPS assembly fell from the right instrument panel, pulling its wiring with it. As it appeared that the falling unit

might cause damage, the commander attempted to catch it, requiring him to stretch across the right seat. At this point the aircraft was still in motion and was approaching a series of bends in the taxiway, firstly to the right followed by a turn left. The aircraft drifted to the left of the centre line and departed the hard surface of the taxiway. The commander attempted to regain the taxiway using the rudder pedals, but the nosewheel sank into a 'french' drain that ran along the side of the taxiway. The nosewheel subsequently collapsed causing damage to the propeller and engine. The commander did not suffer any injuries and was able to exit the aircraft in the normal manner.

The GPS assembly had been held in place on the instrument panel by the use of double-sided sticky tape. The commander suggested that the ambient heat had allowed the tape to soften, reducing its adhesive properties and allowing the unit to fall.

The commander has admitted, in hindsight, that he should not have been distracted by the falling GPS

assembly and, instead of trying to catch the unit with the aircraft still in motion, he should have stopped the aircraft and then dealt with the situation. As a result of this accident, the commander now makes a point of checking the security of all 'temporary' instruments.