

<b>Aircraft Type and Registration:</b>	Rotorway Executive 90 (MOD), G-BUJZ	
<b>No &amp; Type of Engines:</b>	1 Rotorway RI 162 piston engine	
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	1993	
<b>Date &amp; Time (UTC):</b>	8 September 2002 at 1540 hrs	
<b>Location:</b>	Near Retford (Gamston) Airport, Nottinghamshire	
<b>Type of Flight:</b>	Private	
<b>Persons on Board:</b>	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
<b>Injuries:</b>	Crew - None	Passengers - None
<b>Nature of Damage:</b>	Tail rotor blades damaged	
<b>Commander's Licence:</b>	Private Pilot's Licence (Helicopters)	
<b>Commander's Age:</b>	46 years	
<b>Commander's Flying Experience:</b>	182 hours (of which 46 were on type) Last 90 days - 49 hours Last 28 days - 22 hours	
<b>Information Source:</b>	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Whilst on a local flight the pilot contacted Retford (Gamston) radio and informed them that he intended to refuel at Gamston. He later called to say that he had a low fuel state and requested a straight in approach and landing. His final call requested clearance to fly directly to the refuelling area since he was now very low on fuel. Ramp personnel, at the refuelling area, requested confirmation of the type of fuel required but there was no response to subsequent calls made by the radio operator to the helicopter. As he could no longer see or speak to the helicopter the radio operator asked an aircraft taking off from the airfield to attempt to locate the helicopter which was eventually seen to be on the ground in a field abeam Runway 21 threshold. The airfield fire and rescue vehicles were dispatched and arrived at the scene to discover that the helicopter had received minor damage to the tail rotor.

The pilot stated in his report, and this was confirmed by witnesses on the ground, that there had been birds flying over fields being ploughed close to the end of his downwind leg and not long after this sighting there had been a loud bang, the helicopter started to vibrate and yawed to the left. The pilot

entered autorotation and landed in the field. He later reported that he had suffered a bird strike to the tail rotor. The rescue services reported that they had not seen any bird remains and none were found during the repair to the tail rotor that had sustained mechanical damage. Neither the tail boom nor ‘stinger’ had been damaged.