

No: 14/83

Ref: EW/G 83/07/17

Aircraft type and registration: Westland Bell 47G-4A, G-AXKL (light single engine helicopter)

Year of manufacture: Appx 1967

Date and time (GMT): 30 July 1983 at 10.30 hrs

Location: Manor Farm, South Kinsey, Cheshire

Type of flight: Aerial Application

Persons on board: Crew — one Passengers — Nil

Injuries: Crew — minor Passengers — N/A

Nature of damage: Aircraft substantially damaged

Commander's Licence: Airline transport Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 34 years

Commander's total flying experience: 2350 hours (of which 1400 were on type)

The aircraft was operating from Manor Farm on a fine day with a westerly wind estimated at 5 knots. The pilot lifted the aircraft into the hover at a high all up weight and carried out the normal hovering checks. With normal indications the aircraft took off in a west-north-west direction and initiated a climbing turn towards downwind. At an estimated height and speed of 50 ft and 35 knots the pilot experienced a "massive power loss" and the aircraft began to descend. The ground in front of the aircraft was sloping away and contained obstructions in the form of power lines and trees. The pilot turned the aircraft to the right and landed it into wind on more level ground. However, the rotor rpm had by now decayed to the extent that the pilot was unable to prevent a heavy landing.

A subsequent investigation of the fuel system and engine failed to find a cause for the power loss. Following a shock loading inspection, the engine was run in a test cell and performed satisfactorily.