

Piper PA-23-250, G-BGTG, 5 September 2000

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

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

Year of Manufacture: 1979

Date & Time (UTC): 5 September 2000 at 1828 hrs

Location: Ronaldsway Airport, Isle of Man

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 - Passengers - 4

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Propellers damaged beyond repair, belly skin panels abraded, one tyre damaged

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 54 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 252 hours (of which 47 were on type)
Last 90 days - Not Known
Last 28 days - Not Known

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and telephone enquiries

The aircraft was being flown from Belfast, Northern Ireland to Ronaldsway, Isle of Man. The weather was good and the pilot positioned the aircraft downwind for a landing on Runway 26 at Ronaldsway. The pilot was accustomed to operating from a busy airport and was not concerned when ATC asked him to keep the circuit tight to accommodate following commercial traffic. He carried out the downwind checks in his normal manner using the checklist, and the initial approach appeared normal.

The aircraft crossed the coast on short final at 85 kt with full flap selected and the Precision Approach Path Indicators indicating a stable 3° approach path. The pilot flared the aircraft for landing and, as he closed the throttles, he heard what he thought was the stall warning sound. The aircraft settled gently on to the runway on its belly and veered slightly to the left before coming to a halt to the left of the runway centreline. The pilot turned off the fuel and electrics and he and the front seat passenger exited the aircraft through the normal access door while the rear seat passengers used the emergency window hatch. There were no injuries.

The aircraft was found with the landing gear in the fully retracted position and the landing gear selector in the mid position. The Piper Aztec (PA-23) employs a hydraulic power pack system to operate the landing gear and the selector is returned to the mid position after a successful up or down selection. The stall warning system uses the same horn as the landing gear unsafe warning, but the stall warning is an intermittent tone whilst the unsafe gear warning is a continuous tone and includes a flashing light in the landing gear handle. A full functional check of the landing gear extension and retraction system was carried out with no fault being found.