

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Zenair CH 601ULA Zodiac, G-CBAP	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Rotax 912 ULS piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	2001 (Serial no: PFA 162A-13656)	
Date & Time (UTC):	1 July 2014 at 1910 hrs	
Location:	Easter Airfield, Ross-shire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Canopy shattered	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	50 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	104 hours (of which 30 were on type) Last 90 days - 30 hours Last 28 days - 12 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

Shortly after takeoff from Easter Airfield, Ross-shire, for a local flight with two persons on board, the aircraft canopy blew open and shattered. The passenger was able to hold down the remains of the canopy to stop it flapping and the aircraft landed back at the airfield without further incident. There were no injuries and, other than the canopy, the aircraft was undamaged. The canopy latch locking pin had not been properly engaged and allowed the latch to vibrate loose in flight.

History of the flight

Shortly after takeoff for a local flight the aircraft canopy unexpectedly opened in the slipstream with significant force and then shattered. The canopy was side-opening so the passenger was able to hold down the broken canopy to stop it flapping. The pilot then landed the aircraft back at the airfield without further incident. There were no injuries and no additional damage was caused to the aircraft. The canopy opened because the canopy securing latch had worked loose as a result of vibration and wind pressure; the locking pin for the latch had not been correctly located.

Pilot's observations

The pilot considered that the incorrect pin location was an oversight on his part and was not as a result of a design issue. During the incident he observed that as the canopy blew open it caused the aircraft to pitch up due to increased drag. Then, after one or two seconds, the

canopy shattered and the aircraft returned to level flight, with normal handling. On reflection he noted that his pre-flight 'touch' checks did not reveal the incorrect pin location and he would now carry out a more rigorous physical check for correct locking pin engagement.