

No: 1/83

Ref: EW/G82/11/06

Aircraft: Piper PA 23 Aztec G-AZSZ

Year of Manufacture: 1969

Date and time (GMT): 10 November 1982 at 0040 hrs

Location: After take-off from East Midlands Airport

Type of flight: Revenue cargo

Persons on board: Crew - 1 Passengers - Nil

Injuries: Crew - Nil Passengers - N/A

Nature of damage: Hole burnt in starboard engine cowling, overheat damage to alternator and other engine systems such as wiring and hoses

Commander's Licence: Commercial Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 22 years

Commander's total flying experience: 1754 hours (of which 805 hours were on type)

The aircraft was on a flight from East Midlands airport to Dublin. Whilst levelling-off at flight level 060, the pilot noticed 'flames' coming from the starboard engine cowling, although all engine parameters were normal. He then shutdown the engine and the fire appeared to extinguish.

A single-engine approach and landing to East Midlands airport was carried out without further incident and the fire crew confirmed the fire extinguished.

Investigation showed that an exhaust manifold pipe had burst, allowing hot gas to escape and melt various plastic items in the nacelle including the cowling. It did not appear that any self-sustaining fire had occurred.

The manifold had failed due to seizure of a sliding expansion joint which although modified to the latest standard and inspected 6 flying hours previously, had caused the pipe to rupture. The Civil Aviation Authority, Airworthiness Division have been informed of the details of this accident.