

Falco F8L, G-CWAG, 23 February 1999 at 1200 hrs

AAIB Bulletin No: 4/99 Ref: EW/G99/02/12 Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Falco F8L, G-CWAG

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-320-E2A piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1998

Date & Time (UTC): 23 February 1999 at 1200 hrs

Location: Prestwick Airport, Scotland

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 - Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Minor to propeller, cowling and nose landing gear

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 63 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 400 hours (of which 27 were on type)
Last 90 days - 7 hours
Last 28 days - 4 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was pre-flighted in the hangar before being pulled onto the apron by the pilot's passenger using a tow bar attached to the nose landing gear. The pilot then instructed the passenger to remove the tow bar while he left to book out. Having booked out, the pilot and his passenger boarded the aircraft and taxied to the runway. At this point, ATC were informed that the aircraft still had the towbar attached to the nosewheel and transmitted this information to the pilot. The pilot acknowledged the transmission with his callsign but continued onto the runway. On entering the runway, the nose landing gear folded back.

On listening to a recording of the relevant RTF transmissions, the pilot acknowledged that the controller had transmitted a message relating to the towbar but stated that the transmission was unintelligible and that with hindsight he should not have acknowledged it but called for a repeat of the message.

The aircraft had been taxied with the tow bar still attached which had probably caught on the raised lip of the runway. The passenger, who was a frequent flyer, had not heard the pilot's instruction to

remove the tow bar. The pilot observed that all pre-flight checks should be completed by the captain immediately before boarding the aircraft.