

Aircraft: Piper Aztec F PA23-250 G-KEYS (light twin engine fixed wing aircraft)

Year of Manufacture: 1978

Date and time (GMT): 22 February 1983 at 0953 hrs

Location: Carlisle Airport

Type of flight: Non-scheduled passenger

Persons on board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 4

Injuries: Crew - Nil Passengers - Nil

Nature of damage: Damage to nose undercarriage and both propellers

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 44 years

Commander's total flying experience: 7,438 hours (of which 25 were on type)

At the time of the accident the following Class II Notam was in force: "Temporary Notam A104 Carlisle. Until further notice due to resurfacing work Runway 07/25 at this aerodrome is not available. Depending on the progress of work Runways 13/21 and 01/19 may be available. Pilots intending to use this aerodrome must contact ATC before departure in order to ascertain runway availability".

The pilot of G-KEYS did not telephone to establish the state of the runways but relied upon an airborne briefing by radio when he arrived at Carlisle. At 0940 hrs the pilot was cleared to join the circuit at Carlisle on a right hand base leg for Runway 13. He was informed that the landing threshold was displaced by 253 metres on Runway 13 and that there was work in progress on Runway 25. At 0946 he reported that he was too high to approach from a right hand base leg and requested a left hand circuit to give himself more time to lose height. He reports that as he flew downwind he realised that the surface conditions were hazy and that on final approach he would be looking into sun and that his visibility would be reduced. Not wishing to lose sight of the runway he turned in early and then carried out a 360° orbit on final approach to lose height.

The final approach was still steep and the aircraft landed on its nose-wheel approximately 250 metres beyond the displaced threshold. The aircraft then bounced three times before the nose undercarriage collapsed, both propellers hit the runway and the aircraft slid to a halt on its nose with both engines stopped. The slash marks made by the propellers in the runway surface indicated that the engines were developing significant power at the time that the propellers touched. There was no fire and the passengers were evacuated from the aircraft by the pilot.

The "Aerad" landing chart used by the pilot stated that the length of Runway 13 was 1,250 metres instead of the correct value of 909 metres and there was no indication on this chart that the runway threshold was displaced. When the pilot was informed by ATC that the threshold was displaced by 253 metres he assumed that this was a further displacement beyond the visible threshold markings and for this reason landed well down the runway.