

**ACCIDENT**

<b>Aircraft Type and Registration:</b>	Europa XS, G-FELL	
<b>No &amp; Type of Engines:</b>	1 Rotax 912-UL piston engine	
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	1998	
<b>Date &amp; Time (UTC):</b>	3 June 2009 at 1625 hrs	
<b>Location:</b>	1 mile west of Ashcroft Airfield, near Manchester.	
<b>Type of Flight:</b>	Private	
<b>Persons on Board:</b>	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
<b>Injuries:</b>	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
<b>Nature of Damage:</b>	Damage to fibreglass fairings, bent nose leg and one damaged main gear leg	
<b>Commander's Licence:</b>	National Private Pilot's Licence	
<b>Commander's Age:</b>	68 years	
<b>Commander's Flying Experience:</b>	7,633 hours (of which 68 were on type) Last 90 days - 34 hours Last 28 days - 17 hours	
<b>Information Source:</b>	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

**Synopsis**

The aircraft was damaged during a forced landing due to loss of engine power, resulting from a blocked fuel filter. The previous day the pilot had experienced a similar reduction in engine power but had attributed it to vapour lock in the MOGAS fuel.

**History of the flight**

The pilot reported that, on a flight from Oban to Glenforsa, the engine spluttered and coughed twice before he was able to switch on the electric fuel pump. The engine then ran well and the pilot suspected vapour lock as the aircraft had sat in warm sunshine that afternoon and the fuel (MOGAS) temperature would probably have been over 20°C.

The following day the pilot discussed the issue with ground engineers at his home base and they suggested the same likely cause: vapour lock. The fuel filters were not suspected, partly because they had recently been changed. The pilot therefore refuelled with 40 litres of AVGAS at Oban before taking off for Strathaven, where he refuelled with a further 20 litres of MOGAS.

Flying back into England, the engine ran well for almost another two hours. However, close to the MAN low level corridor the engine began to lose power. The pilot turned on the electric fuel pump and this solved the problem for a few minutes. He transmitted that he had a rough-running engine and would be landing

at Ashcroft and, after some radio confusion, started a slipping turn to try to reach Ashcroft's Runway 27. However, realising that, due to a tailwind, he would be touching down too far down the runway, he decided to fly a "dumbell" approach onto Runway 09. During this manoeuvre the engine "surged" and the pilot made a forced landing into a field, with about 100 metres rollout into a barbed wire fence.

The pilot believes the cause of the loss of power was the partially blocked main fuel filter. However, he considers that his lack of system knowledge contributed to the accident, as selection of the reserve tank would probably have cleared the problem. He also considers that he should have ignored the radio when transmission became confused, and concentrated on the forced landing.