

AAIB Bulletin No: 9/95

Ref: EW/G95/07/04

Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-25-235 Pawnee, G-BCBJ

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-540-B2C5 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1963

Date & Time (UTC): 3 July 1995 at 1321 hrs

Location: Approximately 2 nm west of Aboyne Airfield, Aberdeenshire

Type of Flight: Glider Towing

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Substantial to left main landing gear, left wingtip and propeller

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 28 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 320 hours (of which 110 were on type)
Last 90 days - 198 hours
Last 28 days - 40 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was being used as a tug for glider towing operations from Aboyne Airfield. The weather was fine with good visibility, scattered cumulus cloud at 3,500 feet, temperature +14°C and a surface wind of 350° to 010°/5 kt.

The first flight of the day started at 0856 hrs. By 1315 hrs the aircraft's fuel gauge indicated 9 gallons of fuel remaining. The pilot elected to carry out one further flight before refuelling, however, at 1319 hrs as the aircraft reached 1,800 feet on climbout, with a glider in tow, the engine stopped. The pilot released the glider and made a descending right turn looking for a suitable forced landing site and touched down safely in the selected area. She was not able to bring the aircraft to rest before it collided with a dry stone wall forming the upwind boundary of the field. The aircraft came to rest astride the wall. The pilot, who was wearing a full harness vacated the aircraft without injury via the right door.

The pilot assessed the cause of the accident as being due to lack of fuel.