

No: 4/92

Ref: EW/G92/02/06

Category: 1c

Aircraft Type and Registration: Morane Saulnier MS 880B Rallye Club, G-BKUT

No & Type of Engines: 1 Continental O-200-A piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1964

Date & Time (UTC): 16 February 1992 at 1330 hrs

Location: Mayes Coppice Farm, Hampshire

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - Minor Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Wings and engine torn off; damage to remainder of the fuselage structure

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence with IMC and Night ratings

Commander's Age: 48 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 920 hours (of which 112 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and subsequent visit by AAIB Inspector (Operations)

The pilot had intended to take off from one field and land in another to pick up two passengers for local flying. His reasoning was that the first field was inadequate for operating with the additional load. He had delayed his flight because he considered that the wind was too strong and blustery for an earlier departure but at 1300 hrs he felt conditions had improved sufficiently for him to fly. He estimated that at that time the local wind had become steady at approximately 15 to 20 mph from 300°M which was less than that on previous occasions when he had operated from the same field. The pilot calculated that the aircraft was fairly light the only payload being himself with a 20 lb bag and 12 gall imp of fuel. He calculated a 'go/no-go' point but in the event he reported that the aircraft became airborne within one third of the take-off distance available and climbed ahead satisfactorily.

The latter part of the take-off run had been into wind and up a slight incline towards a ridge topped by trees with a fall away of the ground on the far side. The pilot stated that as the aircraft rose above the treeline, at about 150 feet above the ground, the aircraft involuntarily banked to the right and, despite maintaining the climb speed, he could not prevent the roll to the right which continued past 90° of bank. This caused the aircraft to turn 'downwind' rapidly. The aircraft did not respond to earlier or

subsequent corrective action using the ailerons and the nose pitched past the vertical in the ensuing dive. The pilot assumed that at this point the aircraft had stalled and he noted that the ailerons seemed ineffective as if, he said, they had become detached (subsequent investigation by the pilot proved this not to be the case). He made the decision to lessen the angle of impact by closing the throttle, applying hard 'up' elevator and full right rudder. He considered that this action to have been successful as the right wing tip struck the ground first followed by the nose. The aircraft continued in a wide arc during which time the wings and the engine were torn off, apparently absorbing much of the energy. During the impact the right side and top of the instrument panel was twisted upwards and to the left causing it to strike the left hand side of the straining bar beneath the canopy to the left of the pilot's head as well as impacting on the right side of the pilot's face resulting in minor injuries. There is little doubt that the use of a full harness prevented serious if not fatal injuries to the pilot. Fortunately there was no post crash fire.

On questioning the pilot confirmed that to the best of his knowledge the autoslat system had operated normally during the take-off as had the engine. He stated that he had later spoken to two observers who had been close to the ridge at the time of the accident and they had apparently noticed that the wind had, momentarily, markedly increased in strength and had appeared to swirl up the hill towards the ridge coincidental with the time that they saw the aircraft wing drop and the aircraft begin to descend.