

No: 5/85

Ref: EW/G85/03/03

Aircraft type and registration: Cessna 172P G-BIRO (light single engined fixed wing aircraft)

Year of Manufacture: 1981

Date and time (GMT): 10 March 1985 at 1638 hrs

Location: Elstree Aerodrome

Type of flight: Private (pleasure)

Persons on board: Crew — 2 Passengers — 1

Injuries: Crew — None Passengers — None

Nature of damage: Damage to wings and fuselage

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 36 years

Commander's total flying experience: 7000 hours (of which 4 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot.

The aircraft was on a local flight within the Elstree aerodrome circuit area with three occupants on board; the handling pilot, a safety pilot, and one passenger. The handling pilot reports that after flying circuits for approximately 40 minutes he made a further, normal approach to runway 26 but that the landing flare was on the high side. However, as the sink rate towards the runway increased, the safety pilot advised a further backward movement of the control column and the application of more power, and assisted on the controls. The aircraft then 'ballooned' before sinking again, when the left wing dropped to such an extent that the tip contacted the ground. The aircraft swung left off the runway and subsequently, during the recovery back onto the runway, the right wing tip also touched the ground.

In his accident report the operating pilot considers that lack of surface wind information was a contributory factor to this accident. Although there is no anemometer read out at Elstree aerodrome, there are two wind socks, one of which is sited directly abeam the touch down point on runway 26. At the time of the accident the surface wind was from approximately ninety degrees to the right of the runway in use, at about 10 kt.