

SERIOUS INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Cessna 172Q, G-CSFM	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-360-A4N piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1983	
Date & Time (UTC):	5 June 2010 at 1615 hrs	
Location:	Cowley Drive, Woodingdean, East Sussex	
Type of Flight:	Aerial work	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 2	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	No damage to aircraft; damage to house roof tiles	
Commander's Licence:	Commercial Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	53 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	1,511 hours (of which 1,473 were on type) Last 90 days - 42 hours Last 28 days - 10 hours	
Information Source:	AAIB Field Investigation	

Synopsis

Whilst returning from a banner towing detail, the banner detached from the aircraft and fell onto a house, causing damage to roof tiles. Evidence of pre-existing damage to the cable was found, but the cause of this damage could not be determined.

Engineering examination

The banner tow cable was constructed of stranded steel surrounded by a plastic sheath. Examination of the fracture faces of the two halves of the failed cable revealed that the sheathing had been damaged in a plane

at right angles to the cable axis and that the damaged cable had been in use for some time before the final failure. Most of the steel strands of the cable had failed in overload and all failures were at points close to the plane of the damage to the sheath. The failure was consistent with sequential strand failure following initial cable damage. The cause of the damage to the sheath could not be determined.

The operator reported that the cable was supplied by a specialist American company that is no longer trading.