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**ACCIDENT**

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| <b>Aircraft Type and Registration:</b> | Rutan Long-Ez, G-BNCZ   |                   |
| <b>No &amp; Type of Engines:</b>       | 1 Lycoming O-235-C2C piston engine  |                   |
| <b>Year of Manufacture:</b>            | 1988  |                   |
| <b>Date &amp; Time (UTC):</b>          | 1 September 2007 at 0924 hrs  |                   |
| <b>Location:</b>                       | Turweston Aerodrome, Buckinghamshire  |                   |
| <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>               | Main landing gear detached and propeller damaged, lower fuselage, engine cowling and right wing tip scraped |                   |
| <b>Commander's Licence:</b>            | Airline Transport Pilot's Licence   |                   |
| <b>Commander's Age:</b>                | 40 years  |                   |
| <b>Commander's Flying Experience:</b>  | 8,000 hours (of which 10 were on type)<br>Last 90 days - 140 hours<br>Last 28 days - 60 hours               |                   |
| <b>Information Source:</b>             | Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and AAIB telephone enquiries.                          |                   |

**Synopsis**

The canopy opened when the aircraft took off. The pilot landed ahead firmly and the main landing gear detached as a result.

**History of the flight**

The pilot reported that on rotating the aircraft during the takeoff run, the side-hinged canopy became unlatched, and that once the aircraft became airborne, the canopy opened fully. The pilot was concerned that it might then detach and strike the rear mounted pusher propeller so he therefore decided to land ahead on the remaining runway length. A firm landing took place, resulting in

detachment of the main landing gear. The aircraft veered to the right, stopping after running on to the grass.

The pilot stated that the cockpit can become very hot in summer if the aircraft is taxiied with the canopy shut. It is thus sometimes necessary to delay closing it until very shortly before takeoff. He considered that this contributed to his failure to ensure the canopy was fully latched before he began the takeoff roll. Once airspeed was gained, the canopy profile caused lift to be generated, allowing the insecure canopy to open.