

Aircraft type and registration: Cessna FRA 150: G-AZZX

No & Type of engines: One Rolls Royce Continental 0-240-A piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1972

Date and time (UTC): 28 February 1987 at 2359 hrs

Location: Newtonards airfield, N. Ireland

Type of flight: Private (pleasure)

Persons on board: Crew — 1 Passengers — None

Injuries: Crew — Minor Passengers — N/A

Nature of damage: Propeller, nose landing gear strut, engine bearers and roof transparency broken

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 20 years

Commander's Total Flying Experience: 113 hours (of which 14 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the co-owner and subsequent telephone enquiries.

The accident occurred under circumstances which cannot fully be ascertained from either the pilot, the co-owner of the aircraft or any other source.

The pilot states that he left his home at about 2200 hrs and is recorded as having arrived at the airfield, 10 minutes walk away, at about 2350 hrs. As far as can be ascertained, he appeared briefly in the clubhouse and then departed to his aircraft, which was parked on the tarmac opposite the hangars. About 10 minutes later, he returned to the clubhouse in a state of some confusion.

The aircraft was found, lying inverted in a ploughed area adjacent to the runway, 200 metres from where it had been parked.

Subsequent examination showed that the plexi-glass panel above the pilot's head had been broken in a manner suggesting impact from the inside of the aircraft. The pilot had no recollection of events which occurred in the period between leaving home and arriving in the hospital to which he was taken.

Although the pilot had charge of the keys which would have enabled him to turn on the airfield lighting, he did not do so. Nevertheless, he believes that he taxied the aircraft toward the appropriate runway, with the intention of carrying-out some night flying practice prior to acquiring a 'Night Rating'. However, the reading on the aircraft tachometer, which displays hours of engine activity at flight-cruise RPM, indicates that the aircraft could not have been flown around a circuit and, therefore, shows that the accident occurred whilst taxiing.

Furthermore, the damage sustained by the aircraft was consistent with having occurred at taxiing speeds rather than those compatible with flying.

For lack of further evidence, it was not possible to verify the purpose of the flight, or determine the cause of the accident.