

SERIOUS INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Cameron Z-275 balloon, G-VBFT
No & Type of Engines:	None
Year of Manufacture:	2009 (Serial no: 11215)
Date & Time (UTC):	19 July 2013 at 0640 hrs
Location:	Near, Lanark, South Lanarkshire
Type of Flight:	Commercial Air Transport (Passenger)
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 Passengers - 10
Injuries:	Crew - 1 (Minor) Passengers - 7 (Minor)
Nature of Damage:	Damage to basket frame and fence wire
Commander's Licence:	Commercial Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	58 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	408 hours (of which 228 were on type) Last 90 days - 32 hours Last 28 days - 11 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Synopsis

The pilot was unable to arrest an unexpected descent as the balloon was in the final stages of its approach to landing. The basket struck two fences, causing some damage to its frame, before coming to rest in the chosen landing field.

History of the flight

The balloon launched in fine weather and calm conditions at 0640 hrs with the pilot and ten passengers on board. It climbed to about 3,500 ft for a time before descending again, moving in a generally west to south-west direction. After nearly an hour, the pilot identified a landing site in a field, just beyond a railway line and a line of trees. It was also just beyond a minor road, although this was on an embankment and not

visible initially. The pilot instructed the passengers to adopt their landing positions.

The balloon passed over the line of trees at 50 ft and 10 kt, but the speed soon increased to 13 kt and the balloon started to descend. Despite the pilot's efforts to maintain height, the balloon struck a fence before crossing the road and striking another fence on the far side. Both fences were on the embankments, the second being higher than the first. Contact with a solid post in the second fence line damaged the balloon basket frame.

The balloon came to a stop about 30 m into the chosen field. The pilot checked the passengers individually

before supervising their exit from the basket. Some were complaining of knocks and bruises and the pilot decided to call an ambulance. She reported that the passengers who went to hospital were later discharged.