

No: 1/85

Ref: EW/G84/11/09

Aircraft type and registration: Cessna 182P (Skylane) G-BIRS (light single engined fixed wing aircraft)

Year of Manufacture: 1973

Date and time (GMT): 26 November 1984 at 1603 hrs

Location: 3 nm NE of Leicester Airfield

Type of flight: Private (Business)

Persons on board: Crew — 1 Passengers — 1

Injuries: Crew — Nil Passengers — Nil

Nature of damage: Damage to left tailplane, elevator tip and balance weight

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 44 years

Commander's total flying experience: 3190 hours (of which 1750 were on type or similar types)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report form completed by the pilot.

The aircraft, which was used for business purposes, was engaged in a return flight from Sandtoft to its home base at Cranfield. It had been refuelled to full tanks the previous day and prior to departure the fuel gauges registered a quarter full for both wing tanks. The pilot calculated that this would leave him with about 45 minutes of fuel remaining on arrival at destination.

The aircraft departed Sandtoft climbing to FL55 and the pilot noted that in the air the fuel quantity gauges indicated $\frac{1}{3}$ full. After approximately 20 minutes of flight using the left tank, the engine began to run roughly. The pilot diagnosed fuel shortage as the cause of the problem and changed over to the right tank. He also decided to divert to Leicester aerodrome. However, the engine again lost power and finally stopped and a glide descent was commenced. Cottesmore radar provided a steer to Leicester aerodrome and the pilot scanned the terrain for a suitable landing site. Eventually he selected a field which had a gravel strip going uphill in a north westerly direction, the wind being westerly at 10 kt. As height was lost the pilot realised that the final approach to his selected field was obstructed by a large tree. In avoiding the tree the aircraft lost additional height and it became apparent that it was going to be impossible to reach the field which had been chosen. The pilot therefore decided to make the landing in an adjacent field which was closer to him. After touch-down the aircraft ran through an open gateway and came to rest in the field which had been the pilot's original choice. The only damage sustained was to the left tailplane and elevator as the aircraft passed through the gateway.

The aircraft was later flown out of the field using the gravel track for take-off after it had been refuelled and temporary repairs had been carried out. It was later calculated that the aircraft had flown 4 hours 30 minutes since the fuel tanks had been filled.