

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	PZL-Bielsko SZD-45A Ogar, G-BEBG	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Limbach SL 1700-EC piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1976	
Date & Time (UTC):	10 February 2008 at 1430 hrs	
Location:	Hinton-in-the-Hedges, near Brackley, Northants	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	None	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	72 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	902 hours (of which 600 were on type) Last 90 days - 4 hours Last 28 days - 1 hour	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

Whilst taxiing to park at an airfield where parachuting operations were taking place, the left wing tip of the motor glider struck two of a group of parachutists assembled near the left side of the taxiway. At the time, the pilot was concerned about the clearance of the right wing tip from a marker board. There were no injuries.

History of the flight

Following a short flight from Turweston, the aircraft, a motor glider with a wing span of 17.6 m, had landed at Hinton-in-the-Hedges and was taxiing to the fuel pumps. The pilot noted that a group of parachutists had gathered at the left side of the taxiway, close to a fuel bowser being used by the parachute aircraft. They were looking skywards, presumably at their airborne

colleagues. As the pilot both wanted the clear the parachutists with the left wing tip and ensure the right wing tip was going to clear a sign marking the runway holding point, he stopped the aircraft and 'blipped' the throttle to attract the parachutists' attention, following which they started to move away. When he judged they were clear, he moved the aircraft forward at a slow pace. However, he felt a bump and realised that he had struck two of the parachutists with the left wing tip. The pilot was not informed of any injuries and noted that the parachutists had resumed their activities.

He considered that, had the parachutists gathered away from the taxiway and paid attention to aircraft movements, the incident would not have occurred.

However, he also considered, in hindsight, that he should have shut down the aircraft, got out and asked them to move away. In addition, he thought that his ability to judge accurately the distance of the wing tip from the parachutists may have been improved if they had been wearing high visibility tabards.