

No: 9/84

Ref: EW/G84/07/26

Aircraft type and registration: Cameron 0—77 G-BDWW (Hot air balloon)

Year of manufacture: 1976

Date and time (GMT): 21 July 1984 at 1745 hrs

Location: Lowfold Farm, Wisborough Green, Sussex

Type of flight: Private

Persons on board: Crew — 1 Passengers — 2

Injuries: Crew — Nil Passengers — Nil

Nature of damage: Balloon destroyed

Commander's Licence: Private balloon licence

Commander's Age: 28 years

Commander's total flying experience: 70 hours

Information Source: Accident Report pro-forma completed by the pilot.

The balloon was being blown towards the Gatwick Control Zone so the pilot decided to land. He selected a suitable field ahead but he was too high to land in the first field. He therefore opted to land in the next field which contained a partly harvested barley crop. The rip panel was pulled at 15 ft agl and the pilot attempted to extinguish the pilot light for the burner. However, before he could close the pilot light valve the basket hit the ground and turned over. The standing crop of barley ignited and the fire became quickly out of control. The occupants escaped clear of the burning wreckage and shortly afterwards three propane cylinder explosions were heard. Three acres of barley were destroyed.