

No: 8/91

Ref: EW/G91/06/18

Category: 1b

Aircraft Type and Registration: Schweizer Grumman G-164B Ag-Cat, G-BDZF

No & Type of Engines: 1 Pratt & Whitney R985-AN1 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1976

Date & Time (UTC): 20 June 1991 at 1420 hrs

Location: Near Peasenhall, Suffolk

Type of Flight: Commercial

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Minor damage to the left side interplane struts and aileron control linkage

Commander's Licence: Commercial Pilot's Licence
(Swiss with British validation)

Commander's Age: 53 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 13,152 hours (of which 250 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot plus telephone enquiries.

The aircraft was engaged in spraying a crop of oil seed rape; the weather was fine with a very light wind and a visibility of more than 10 km. The commander had been briefed on the local hazards including two sets of 24,000 volt power cables. One set ran in a north-westerly direction across the western boundary of the spray area and the other ran at right angles to the first set and across the crop. On arrival in the area, the commander identified the power cables, inspected them and mentally noted their position. He judged that his aircraft was too big to fly under the cables and was, therefore, committed to popping up and over the cables which spanned the crop during each spray run. He commenced his first spray run parallel to the north-westerly cables but during the run he lost sight of the set which crossed his flight path. On pulling up to re-locate these cables he struck them.

The copper cables were severed by left side inter-plane struts. The leading interplane strut was slightly bent but the inter-aileron strut, which transmitted roll control inputs from the lower aileron to the upper, detached from the upper aileron and trailed behind the lower aileron. Although the left upper aileron was floating, the commander had no difficulty in retaining control of the aircraft and landing back at his base strip.