

AAIB Bulletin No: 2/96

Ref: EW/G95/11/10

Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: i) Luscombe 8E Silvaire , G-AKUH
ii) Taylorcraft BC-12D, G-BREY

No & Type of Engines: i) 1 Continental O-200-A piston engine
ii) 1 Continental A65-8 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: i) 1946 ii) 1946

Date & Time (UTC): 12 November 1995 at 1545 hrs

Location: 4 miles north of Leicester Airport

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: i) Crew -1 Passengers - None
ii) Crew -1 Passengers -None

Injuries: i) Crew - None Passengers - N/A
ii) Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: i) Severe damage to fin, rudder and tailplane
ii) Damage to propeller and nose cowling

Commander's Licence: i) Private Pilot's Licence
ii) Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: i) 46 years
ii) 45 years

Commander's Flying Experience: i) 815 hours (of which 400 were on type)
Last 90 days - 30 hours
Last 28 days - 7 hours
ii) 294 hours (of which 170 were on type)
Last 90 days - 15 hours
Last 28 days - 2 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Forms submitted by the pilots

Prior to their departure from Leicester Airport, both pilots had agreed that they would spend a period of time flying in formation. They took off separately, departed the Aerodrome Traffic Zone and established radio contact on a pre-arranged frequency. 'UH took up an echelon position on the left side of 'EY. The aircraft were at about 1,800 feet above aerodrome elevation, some 4 nm north of the airport. After a few minutes, 'UH moved into a line abreast formation, again on the left side of 'EY and held this for a short time. The flying conditions were reported as very smooth with a good visibility.

'UH then dropped back behind, such that it was out of sight to the pilot of 'EY. After a short time, the pilot of 'EY made a radio transmission to the other pilot requesting his position and intentions. The other pilot replied that he was still behind 'EY and that 'EY should maintain straight and level flight, which was complied with. Shortly after this, through the left window, the pilot of 'EY observed the left wingtip of 'UH passing below him on the same heading. On looking forward, the pilot of 'EY observed 'UH to be very close, directly in front and just below. A loud bang and clatter followed immediately, as the fin and rudder of 'UH came into contact with the propeller of 'EY. The pilot of 'EY pulled up and away. Both aircraft managed to return to land at Leicester, although the pilot of 'UH had lost the use of the rudder such that turning the aircraft was difficult, and the pilot of 'EY reported significant engine vibration due to the loss of part of one propeller blade.

Although both pilots had flown together in formation practices on previous occasions, neither had undertaken any formal training in the exercise, nor was any pre-flight plan agreed in terms of the formations to be practised nor the responsibilities of each pilot in the formation. Neither pilot had read the standard training text books on the subject prior to this accident.