

No: 6/98

Ref: EW/G89/04/08

Category: 1c

**Aircraft Type and Registration:** Reims Cessna F150M, G-BCTW

**No & Type of Engines:** 1 Continental Motors Corporation O-200-A piston engine

**Year of Manufacture:** 1975

**Date and Time (UTC):** 12 April 1989 at 1000 hrs

**Location:** 3 miles South of Killy Leagh, Northern Ireland

**Type of Flight:** Pleasure

**Persons on Board:** Crew - 1                      Passengers - 1

**Injuries:** Crew - None                      Passengers - None

**Nature of Damage:** Beyond economical repair

**Commander's Licence:** Private Pilot's Licence with IMC and Night Ratings

**Commander's Age:** 50 years

**Commander's Total Flying Experience:** 988 hours (of which 26 were on type)

**Information Source:** Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot was carrying out a local area flight from Newtownards and flying at 500 feet on a southerly heading over Strangford Lough. The reported wind was 220°/10 kt and the temperature +7°C. Abeam of Killy Leagh he descended to 300 feet, selecting carburettor heat to guard against any possible engine icing in the descent, and circled a small group of islands. The engine power setting provided 2300 propeller rpm.

A short while later, when abeam the southern end of the islands, the pilot applied full power and climbed back to 500 feet. At the top of the climb, the engine power suddenly dropped and the propeller rpm fell to 1200. He therefore carried out the Forced Landing Drills and transmitted a Mayday (Distress) call on the Belfast Harbour "Approach" frequency which he had been operating.

The pilot selected a field straight ahead of the aircraft but, having descended to 150 feet, he saw that it was saturated with water and had a steeper gradient than he had realised. The only remaining landing area was a small peninsular on the southern shore of the lough which, from his present position and height, he would have to land across rather than use the longer distance in towards the land.

Deciding that the distance available was insufficient for a normal landing, the pilot pushed the control column forward on touchdown in order to break the nose landing gear. The propeller dug into the soil

and the aircraft turned over onto its back. There was no fire, both of the diagonal restraint harnesses withstood the forces of the impact and the occupants escaped without injury.

During the Mayday message, the pilot stated that the cause of the engine problem was fuel starvation, however, subsequent examination revealed the presence of fuel in the carburettor.