

Cessna 182Q Skylane, G-PL EE

AAIB Bulletin No: 2/97 Ref: EW/G96/11/02 Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Cessna 182Q Skylane, G-PL EE
No & Type of Engines:	1 Continental O-470-U piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1978
Date & Time (UTC):	10 November 1996 at 1515 hrs
Location:	Shotton Colliery Airfield
Type of Flight:	Private
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 - Passengers - 3
Injuries:	Crew - None - Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Damage to nose landing gear, engine and engine compartment
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence with Night Rating
Commander's Age:	51 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	289 hours (of which 170 were on type) Last 90 days - 21 hours Last 28 days - 3 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was being flown on its second lift of three sportparachutists of the day. It was reported to have performed normally during the take off and climbed uneventfully to 1800 feet, whereupon the pilot noticed a sea 'fret' (fog) approaching the airfield. He considered this might cover the airfield before he could land, should he complete the intended flight, and so he made the decision to return, descending rapidly to the circuit. After lining up with Runway 12 on final approach, the engine lost power, and the aircraft descended sooner than intended causing it to strike the airfield perimeter fence. This pitched the aircraft down, resulting in it striking the ground door. None of those on board were injured and all were able to exit the aircraft via its right door. Later examination of the aircraft by maintenance personnel failed to reveal any cause for the engine problem, and the pilot considered that the engine may have been affected by carburettor icing, resulting in the loss of power. The air temperature at the time of the accident was close to 0°C, with visible moisture present.

Aircraft used in the parachutist-dropping role require exemption from Article 49 of the Air Navigation Order which essentially prohibits the dropping of persons, except in the case of an emergency. GPL EE had been granted an exemption in the form of a CAA supplement to the Pilot's Operating Handbook, which forms part of the Certificate of Airworthiness. This allowed for it to be used for free-fall parachuting, but subject to 12 limitations. Two of these limitations required that the right entry door, and all but the pilot's seat, must be removed thus not providing any form of restraint for the parachutists. It is custom and practice in the sport of free-fall parachuting for participants to wear protective clothing and helmets in addition to their parachutes which, together with knowledge of the 'brace' position taught during training, is deemed to provide adequate protection in the event of turbulence or an emergency landing. Aircraft capable of lifting greater numbers of parachutists, for example the Shorts Skyvan, contain fittings which provide restraint when connected to the parachutist's harness.