

AAIB Bulletin No: 11/93

Ref: EW/G93/09/05

Category: 1.3

INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-31-350 Navajo Chieftan, G-NIKY

No & Type of Engines: 2 Lycoming TIO-540-J2BD piston engines

Year of Manufacture: 1977

Date & Time (UTC): 7 September 1993 at 2210 hrs

Location: Southend Airport, Essex

Type of Flight: Public Transport

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: None

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 54 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 3,887 hours (of which 900 were on type)
Last 90 days - Nil hours
Last 28 days - Nil hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft had departed Southend Airport for Brussels. The take off had been normal but, as he passed 2,000 feet, the pilot noted what appeared to be flames flickering through the ventilation louvres in the cowling of the right engine. He shut down the engine and completed the fire drill before declaring an emergency and returning to Southend without further incident.

Upon examination of the engine, no evidence of fire damage was found but a considerable amount of oil was present in the engine bay, particularly around the exhaust system and turbocharger. It was then decided to run the engine to locate the leak which was seen to emanate from a crack in the rear left cylinder. Upon replacement of the affected cylinder and another which had a small crack, no further problems were reported.