

Enstrom 280FX, G-BSIE

AAIB Bulletin No: 2/99 Ref: EW/G98/09/14 Category: 2.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Enstrom 280FX, G-BSIE

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming HIO-360-F1AD piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1990

Date & Time (UTC): 21 September 1998 at 1622 hrs

Location: Westhoughton, Greater Manchester

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 - Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Damage to right skid, right side of fuselage, rotor blades and mast head

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence (Helicopters)

Commander's Age: 61 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 100 hours (all on type)

Last 90 days - 16 hours

Last 28 days - 12 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The helicopter was making a normal approach in nil wind conditions to a helipad at Westhoughton, Manchester, after a flight from Barton. Just as the helicopter was approaching a 13 feet high boundary fence, the pilot sensed a change in the note of the engine which was coupled with a yaw to the right. Rather than attempting to land on the pad, he decided to land in an adjacent field. However, due to the yawing motion of the helicopter and the fact that recent heavy rain had made the surface of the field soft, the right skid 'dug into' the surface causing the helicopter to tip over onto its right side. However there was no fire and the pilot, who was uninjured, was able to make his escape through the left door.

The helicopter was subsequently removed to a maintenance organisation where an initial examination and assessment of the damage was carried out. Witness marks between the cooling fan and the structure suggested that the engine had stopped by the time that this damage had occurred, but there was no external evidence of any defect or failure upon visual inspection of the engine. The helicopter had been damaged sufficiently in the accident for it to be classified as an insurance 'write-off' and it is presently awaiting sale. Should any significant defects become apparent during any future stripdown or re-build, they will be reported upon in a future AAIB Bulletin.