

MD-11, N813DE

AAIB Bulletin No: 8/99 Ref: EW/G99/05/24 Category: 1.1

Aircraft Type and Registration: MD-11, N813DE

No & Type of Engines: 3 Pratt and Whitney PW-4460 turbofan engines

Year of Manufacture: 1996

Date & Time (UTC): 19 May 1999 at 0053 hrs

Location: Cambridge Airport

Type of Flight: Ferry flight

Persons on Board: Crew - 3 - Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: General damage to rear underside of fuselage, antennae, drains and access doors; Buckling to rear pressure bulkhead

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 57 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 10,000 hours (of which 452 were on type)

Last 90 days - 55 hours

Last 28 days - Not known

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft suffered a tailstrike on landing from a visual approach to Runway 05 at Cambridge. The weather was good and the surface wind was 090°/5 to 7 kt. The usable landing distance beyond the threshold is 5,735 feet. A major amount of the debris from the tailstrike was found between 1,350 and 1,550 feet from the threshold.

The commander reported that the approach was stable but when he started to lower the nose after touchdown the pitch attitude increased rapidly. He was unsure whether the aircraft was still on the runway and, as he considered the runway too short to recover from a 'bounce', he applied power and went around. It was his opinion that this was the point when the tailstrike occurred. The subsequent landing was uneventful.