

Yak-52, RA44473

AAIB Bulletin No: 12/2002 Ref: EW/G2002/09/13 Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Yak-52, RA44473	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Ivchenko Vedeneyev M-14P piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1991	
Date & Time (UTC):	15 September 2002 at 1915 hrs	
Location:	Popham Airfield, Hampshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Propeller damaged and engine shock loaded	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilots Licence	
Commander's Age:	33 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	424 hours (of which 101 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 19 hours	
	Last 28 days - 10 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and telephone enquiries	

The pilot had flown to Compton Abbas, Dorset, earlier in the day to practise aerobatics and was returning to the aircrafts home base at Popham, Hampshire. The weather was fine, but dusk was approaching and the pilot was keen to land before sunset.

On the downwind leg at Popham the pilot remembers selecting the undercarriage DOWN and confirming the landing gear position by reference to both the landing gear green lights and the external, mechanical landing gear indicators. On base leg when attempting to select flaps down, the pilot thought he noticed the flaps were already extended. At this point he became confused, and his recollection of events is not complete, but he remembers making selections which he believed had placed the aircraft in the desired landing configuration. However, during the landing flare there was a loud bang from the rear of the aircraft and the propeller came into contact with the ground and

disintegrated during the remaining landing roll. The landing gear on the YAK 52 is only semiretractable and damage to the aircraft was limited to the propeller and engine. The pilot vacated the aircraft uninjured through the normal exit.

In a very frank report the pilot stated that, during his confusion over the aircrafts configuration on base leg, he had inadvertently reselected the landing gear to UP. The flap and landing gear selectors in the cockpit are some distance apart but are of very similar design. Lights are used for flap and landing gear position indication and both sets of lights are located adjacent to the landing gear selector. The pilot recalls that during conversion training considerable emphasis had been placed on the procedures to be followed to prevent inadvertent selection of either service.

The pilot considered a number of other factors might have contributed to the accident. He had been in a rush to land before sunset; he had not taken his normal break between completing his last aerobatics session and returning to Popham; the light at dusk made it more difficult to perceive that the aircraft was settling lower than normal during the landing.