

No: 11/89

Ref: EW/G89/06/32

Category: 1b

Aircraft Type and Registration: Beech 95-B55A, G-AYKA

No & Type of Engines: 2 Continental Motors Corp IO-470-L piston engines

Year of Manufacture: 1964

Date and Time (UTC): 18 June 1989 at 0820 hrs

Location: Elstree aerodrome, Hertfordshire

Type of Flight: Private (pleasure)

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 2

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Engines, propellers, landing gear doors and fuselage skin damaged

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 36 years

Commander's Total Flying Experience: 190 hours (of which 38 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and AAIB telephone enquiries

During the pre-flight and pre-take-off checks the aircraft and its systems displayed no anomalies. However, during the take-off when the pilot retracted the landing gear, radio communication with the Elstree ground station was lost. He then checked the avionics master switch and the circuit breakers but, despite the selection of the emergency electrical supply, he was unable to reinstate the system, though he later stated that there was an occasional "crackle" on the intercom.

The pilot decided to return to Elstree and land. When positioned on the downwind leg he selected landing gear down and, although both he and the passengers believed that they heard and felt the gear lower, neither the "gear unsafe" nor the "gear down" lights illuminated. However, the mechanical position indicator (nose gear only) appeared to show that the landing gear was extended. Both the landing gear and the flaps are selected electrically and when the pilot selected 15° of flap, they extended to only about 5° and stopped.

As the pilot had no RTF contact with Elstree, on his final approach to land he attempted to flash the landing lights in order to draw attention to his emergency situation and then continued with the landing. Both propellers struck the runway simultaneously and the aircraft slid to a halt in about 150 metres. The pilot stated that he saw smoke coming from the left engine and evacuated the aircraft.