

DH 82A Tiger Moth, G-AJTW, 5 June 1999

AAIB Bulletin No: 4/2000 **Ref:** EW/G99/06/05 **Category:** 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: DH 82A Tiger Moth, G-AJTW

No & Type of Engines: 1 Gipsy Major 1 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1939

Date & Time (UTC): 5 June 1999 at 1040 hrs

Location: Field next to Raydon Airfield, Suffolk

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 - Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - 1 Minor - Passengers - 1 Minor

Nature of Damage: Severe damage

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 52 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 950 hours (of which 821 were on type)

Last 90 days - 19 hours

Last 28 days - 11 hours

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

The aircraft attended Raydon airstrip for a 'photo shoot'. According to the pilot he was making an offset approach to land on Runway 27 with the surface wind blowing across the strip. He stated that he misjudged the height of a crop of standing wheat in the undershoot and the aircraft's main wheels touched the crop about 30 feet short of the strip threshold. The resultant drag reduced the aircraft's forward speed and it dropped onto its nose and port wing. The crash slewed the aircraft through 180° and it came to rest on its left side. Both occupants escaped from the aircraft with bruises.

An alternative explanation for the accident was forwarded to the AAIB which claimed that the pilot was carrying out his fifth low fly-past for a publicity photograph in close proximity to grass cutting equipment. After passing the equipment at low height on a southerly heading, the aircraft gained height, turned through 100° and descended once more on a north easterly heading. It continued descending and the landing gear touched the crop causing the aircraft to 'flip over'.

Shortly after the accident the CAA informed the AAIB that they were considering taking legal action against the pilot. The CAA subsequently prosecuted the pilot who pleaded guilty in court to endangerment in contravention of Article 55 of the Air Navigation Order. The pilot was fined £2,000 plus costs of £350 and the aircraft insurers denied the aircraft owner's claim because of the pilot's deliberate infringements of the law.