

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Avions Pierre Robin DR400-180R, D-EKSI	
No & Type of Engines:	O-360 piston engine	
Category:	1.3	
Year of Manufacture:	1978	
Date & Time (UTC):	7 August 2005 at 1330 hrs	
Location:	Lasham Airfield, Hampshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Destroyed by fire	
Commander's Licence:	JAR Commercial Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	34 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	1,200 hours (of which 840 were on type) Last 90 days - 90 hours Last 28 days - 70 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

The aircraft was engaged in aerotow operations at Lasham Airfield and was in the process of carrying out its second glider launch after refueling.

At about 30 ft after takeoff, the pilot sensed the glider release and, upon checking in the mirror, saw smoke and heard a radio call announcing that the aircraft was on fire. She responded by immediately closing the throttle and landing straight ahead, touching down on the grass strip to the north of the paved runway, and completing the 'immediate actions' for engine fire during the latter part of the landing. As the aircraft decelerated, she steered back onto the hard runway and applied maximum braking but was unable to stop before running off the end of the paved surface.

The aircraft came to rest approximately 20 m into the grass overshoot area for Runway 27 and, after confirming that the ignition, fuel and electrics were OFF, the pilot vacated the aircraft in the normal manner. By this stage, smoke was already entering the cockpit and flames were visible outside the aircraft. The pilot had a quick look for the fire extinguisher, but as the fire was already burning quite fiercely, she decided it was safer to vacate the area. Because it presented no threat to life, no attempt was made to extinguish the fire subsequently and the aircraft was totally destroyed.

The tug master witnessed the incident and described seeing smoke coming from beneath the engine cowl as the aircraft started its take-off roll. Flames were

by the time it reached a height of approximately 40 ft. He confirmed that the pilot was informed of the fire by radio, at about the time when the glider released, and his description of the ensuing events accords with that given by the pilot. He stated that immediately after the aircraft came to rest, flames were visible in the forward bulkhead area and the fire quickly took hold. He described the smoke which he saw as the aircraft took off as blue/white

in colour, and very dense, consistent, in his opinion with oil, possibly from the oil cooler, spraying on to the exhaust system.

The severity of the fire was such that little remained of the wooden aircraft, other than the landing gear and basic engine block, and as such, no meaningful investigation was possible to establish the cause of the fire.