

ACCIDENT

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| Aircraft Type and Registration: | Reims Cessna F152, G-BLZH | |
| No & Type of Engines: | 1 Lycoming O-235-L2C piston engine | |
| Year of Manufacture: | 1985 | |
| Date & Time (UTC): | 4 September 2007 at 1400 hrs | |
| Location: | Deanland Airfield, 4 miles north of Eastbourne | |
| Type of Flight: | Private | |
| Persons on Board: | Crew - 1 | Passengers - 1 |
| Injuries: | Crew - None | Passengers - None |
| Nature of Damage: | Damage to the left wing and the left elevator | |
| Commander's Licence: | Private Pilot's Licence | |
| Commander's Age: | 78 years | |
| Commander's Flying Experience: | 932 hours (of which 82 were on type) Last 90 days - 10 hours Last 28 days - 4 hours | |
| Information Source: | Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot | |

Synopsis

The aircraft landed on a short, wet, grass strip and went off the end of the runway.

History of the flight

The pilot flew the aircraft from Rochester to Deanland, near Lewes, in weather conditions described as good, and established the aircraft on long finals for Runway 24. This grass runway is 500 m long. The surface wind was from 290° at 5 kt, which resulted in a slight crosswind from the right. The pilot described the approach as normal and selected full flap with a view to performing a short field landing. After touching down on the runway centreline, the pilot applied the brakes and the aircraft started to drift to the left. The aircraft continued off the end of the runway, to the left of the centreline, with

the brakes applied. The left wing struck a low hangar and the aircraft span around through 270°. The aircraft came to rest with the left elevator against the side of the building.

The pilot considered that he should have touched down 50 m shorter and 5 kt slower. He also believed that recent wet weather had made the short grass more slippery.

Comment

The CAA advice to pilots is that when landing on runways where the length is not generous they should ensure that they touch down at, or very close to, their aiming point.

The grass strip at Deanland is 500 m long. The Cessna 152 flight manual gives a landing distance from 50 ft of 1,200 ft (366 m). These performance figures are those achieved by the manufacturer using a new aeroplane and engine, in ideal conditions, and flown by a highly experienced pilot. The CAA therefore strongly recommend that pilots apply a safety factor of 1.33 for take off and 1.43 for landing to give an acceptable safety

margin for an out-of-practice pilot, flying in less than favourable conditions and allowing for wear and tear on the aeroplane and engine. They also advise that as short wet grass is slippery pilots should apply an additional safety factor of 1.6. Thus, the landing distance required at Deanland for a Cessna 152 on short wet grass should be $366 \text{ m} \times 1.43 \times 1.6$ which equates to 837 m.