

Cessna Citation 1/SP Model 501, VP-CAT

AAIB Bulletin No: 9/97 Ref: EW/G97/07/02 Category: 1.2

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| Aircraft Type and Registration: | Cessna Citation 1/SP Model 501, VP-CAT |
| No & Type of Engines: | 2 Pratt & Whitney JT15D-1A turbofan engines |
| Year of Manufacture: | 1981 |
| Date & Time (UTC): | 2 July 1997 at 1708 hrs |
| Location: | Elstree Aerodrome, Hertfordshire |
| Type of Flight: | Private |
| Persons on Board: | Crew - 2 - Passengers - 2 |
| Injuries: | Crew - None - Passengers - None |
| Nature of Damage: | Extensive to Tailcone; Surface scratching to rear underside of fuselage and flaps and associated aerial damage; right wheel damaged |
| Commander's Licence: | Airline Transport Pilot's Licence with FI Rating |
| Commander's Age: | 51 years |
| Commander's Flying Experience: | 23,750 hours (of which 160 were on type) Last 90 days - 138 hours Last 28 days - 64 hours |
| Information Source: | Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and subsequent enquiries by the AAIB |

After an uneventful flight from Cranfield, VP-CAT was established on a visual approach to Runway 26 at Elstree. The weather was good with a light southerly surface wind and the commander was monitoring the approach being flown by the other pilot; this other pilot was the holder of a Private Pilot's Licence and had a total of 280 hours flying experience, of which 41 hours were on the Citation.

The commander considered that the handling pilot made a good approach but that he flared too quickly and too much. The aircraft touched down but on the ground the handling pilot experienced difficulty in maintaining directional control; the commander took control and brought VP-CAT to a stop on the runway. Subsequently, the crew noted that the right tyre had detached from the right wheel and surmised that the accident had been caused by a flat tyre.

Observers on the ground considered that the final approach was steep and that the aircraft landed short of the threshold in a high 'nose-up' attitude. Fresh marks were detected on the ground before the threshold indicating that the tail section of VP-CAT contacted the ground at the same time as the main gear and that the trailing edge of the flaps also contacted the ground.

Subsequently, the commander acknowledged that the aircraft may have landed before the runway threshold, although on the prepared surface.