

Piper PA-28-180, G-AVSF

AAIB Bulletin No: 1/2001

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Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-28-180, G-AVSF

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-360-A4A piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1967

Date & Time (UTC): 13 November 2000 at 1400 hrs

Location: Near Petersfield, Hampshire

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 - Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Dent in left wing leading edge, inboard of stall warning vane. Pitot head under left wing ripped off, damage to underwing surface at pitot attachment points

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence with IMC Rating

Commander's Age: 47 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 409 hours (of which 300 were on type)

Last 90 days - 4 hours

Last 28 days - 2 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot was conducting a cross-country flight from Blackbushe. He was maintaining an altitude of 2,300 feet in good VMC (below cloud, visibility 10 km+) and heading in a generally westerly direction, intending to track to the north of the South Downs between Midhurst and Petersfield before turning left to the south coast and then returning to Blackbushe. Having just checked his map, he looked out and noticed an object flash past through his 10 to 11 o'clock position. This was immediately followed by a loud 'thump' and the aircraft shuddered. It was instantly apparent to the pilot that the aircraft had hit a large bird and he saw, over his left shoulder, a shape tumbling away towards the ground. From the flash of colours noticed (brown/white/cream) the pilot thought that he had hit either a Buzzard or an immature Gull.

The aircraft continued to perform normally and so initially the pilot continued with the flight. However, after a few minutes as the aircraft entered an orbit the ASI reading reduced to zero. Realising that the impact had been more severe than he had at first thought, and that the pitot head

had likely been damaged, he returned to Blackbushe. After executing a low approach and go-around so that the tower personnel could check for any further damage, the pilot made a full flap approach and normal landing.

On inspection, the left wing leading edge was seen to be dented inboard of the stall warning vane and the pitot head had been ripped off with associated damage to the lower wing skin.