

No: 8/89

Ref: EW/G89/06/16

Category: 1c

**Aircraft Type and Registration:** Piper PA17, G-ALIJ

**No & Type of Engines:** 1 Continental Motors Corp A65-8 piston engine

**Year of Manufacture:** 1949

**Date and Time (UTC):** 17 June 1989 at 1145 hrs

**Location:** Popham Airfield, Hampshire

**Type of Flight:** Private (pleasure)

**Persons on Board:** Crew - 1 Passengers - 1

**Injuries:** Crew - None Passengers - None

**Nature of Damage:** Left landing gear collapsed, propeller tips bent and wing bracing strut bent

**Commander's Licence:** Private Pilot's Licence

**Commander's Age:** 30 years

**Commander's Total Flying Experience:** 304 hours (of which 3 were on type)

**Information Source:** Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was taking off from a grass surface and available take-off distance of 100 metres. At the end of a 1 hr 20 minute flight the pilot made a curving glide approach to the grass runway 08 at Popham airfield. Although the pilot considered that the flight path was slightly low, he did not apply power but allowed the air speed to fall to 55 kt as the aircraft crossed the runway threshold. When he lowered the nose of the aircraft and reduced power, at about 10 feet over the threshold, the aircraft sank rapidly. He applied full power and raised the nose in an attempt to cushion the landing. A heavy bounce resulted, but the pilot was able to regain control and make a three point landing.

After about 3 seconds of the landing run, the aircraft began to pull to the left. The pilot countered this by progressive use of brakes, rudder and aileron until the wing sank to the ground, dragging the aircraft 20 metres to the left of the centre line and yawing it 20° to the left. Both occupants vacated the aircraft without difficulty. There was no fire.

The pilot has subsequently stated that he believes that the accident resulted from not allowing for a heavier than normal passenger and allowing the airspeed to fall below 60 kt during the approach.