

No: 8/89

Ref: EW/G89/05/15

Category: 1c

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-28-161, G-BNJM

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-320-O3G piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1982

Date and Time (UTC): 18 May 1989 at 1000 hrs

Location: Middleton, Cumbria

Type of Flight: Private (pleasure)

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Substantial damage to the engine, propeller, nose landing gear and left wing. damage to fuselage and main landing gear

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 41 years

Commander's Total Flying Experience: 100 hours (of which 54 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot obtained a meteorological briefing, by telephone, from the Airmet-North service at about 0800 hrs and the aircraft left Teesside Airport at 0900 hrs on a VFR flight plan to Cork, Republic of Ireland. As the aircraft crossed the eastern edge of the Pennines, the pilot noted that the weather had deteriorated both ahead and behind him. He maintained visual contact with the ground and continued on his planned course. As the flight progressed the conditions deteriorated further and the pilot deviated from his planned flight path in order to maintain visual contact. However, he soon became uncertain of his position and elected to carry out a precautionary landing as soon as practicable. This was accomplished on open, rough ground adjacent to a farm track, at approximately 1300 feet amsl. The aircraft was substantially damaged during the landing but both occupants vacated the aircraft uninjured. The time was about 1000 hrs. After a short while, the pilot re-entered the aircraft and used the radio to alert the emergency services. A police vehicle and a SAR helicopter arrived on the site at about 1145 hrs.

A transcript of the Airmet-North weather report for the period was obtained from the Meteorological Office at Bracknell. The general situation was that a moist west-south-westerly airstream covered the whole region. The surface visibility was forecast to be 12 kilometres reducing to 7 kilometres in rain, locally 1500 metres in drizzle and 200 metres in sea, hill and coastal fog. The cloud was given as broken stratocumulus base 2500 feet, with an occasional broken layer base 1000 feet, top above 15000 feet with embedded cumulus. Cloud was forecast to cover hills in the area.