

Jodel D112, G-BHHX, 5 March 2000 at 1530 hrs

AAIB Bulletin No: 8/2000 **Ref: EW/G2000/03/03** **Category: 1.3**

Aircraft Type and Registration: Jodel D112, G-BHHX

No & Type of Engines: 1 Continental A65-8F piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1954

Date & Time (UTC): 5 March 2000 at 1530 hrs

Location: South of Bridgewater, Somerset

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 - Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Failed elevator trim tab cable

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 40 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 576 hours (of which 16 were on type)
Last 90 days - 7 hours
Last 28 days - 5 hours

Information Source: Air Accident Report Form completed by the pilot

In flight vibration

As the aircraft was returning to Dunkeswell at a height of 1,500 feet, following a flight to a private airstrip in the Mendip hills, the pilot and passenger suddenly experienced the onset of severe airframe vibration, accompanied by vibration of both control sticks in the fore and aft direction. The pilot immediately reduced airspeed and the vibration decreased, but it was still 'very pronounced'. The pilot and his passenger gripped their control sticks to 'dampen' the stick vibration. The pilot then contacted Dunkeswell and informed the controller of his problem, and declared his intention to make a precautionary landing in a field at Kingston-St-Mary (some 14 miles to the northeast of the Dunkeswell Airfield). The controller informed the pilot of a YAK 52 which was in the same area, and the pilot of this aircraft then circled over the Jodel until it was observed to have landed safely in the grass field; the Yak pilot then informed Dunkeswell that the Jodel had carried out a satisfactory forced landing.

Inspection of the aircraft

After the forced landing the pilot inspected the elevator and readily determined that the wire to the elevator trim tab had broken at the point where it was fixed to the tab input arm. Failure of the wire had allowed the tab to 'flutter' and induce flutter-displacement of the elevator. The trim tab was reportedly then removed from the elevator, and the aircraft later departed from the field and continued its flight uneventfully to Dunkeswell.

The aircraft had been issued with a Permit to Fly by the Popular Flying Association (PFA) in September 1999. Following notification of this incident, the PFA strongly recommended that aircraft should not be flown after such modification of a flying control system, however temporary or expedient, without prior PFA knowledge and approval. In this case, replacement of the trim cable was the only acceptable means of restoring the airworthiness of the aircraft for further flight.