

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Maule MX-7-180C Super Rocket, with floats, G-OMOL	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-360-C1F piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	2000	
Date & Time (UTC):	23 May 2009 at 1013 hrs	
Location:	Goles Forest, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passenger - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passenger - 1
Nature of Damage:	Damaged beyond economic repair	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilots's Licence	
Commander's Age:	39 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	2,053 hours (of which 8 were on type) Last 90 days - 8 hours Last 28 days - 5 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and additional inquiries by the AAIB	

Synopsis

Whilst avoiding heavy showers the aircraft was subjected to severe turbulence and downdrafts which resulted in it descending and unable to outclimb the terrain, the pilot made a forced landing into a forest. Both occupants escaped uninjured.

History of the flight

The commander reported that he planned to fly VFR from Aghadowey, 6 nm south of Coleraine, Northern Ireland, to Enniskillen via Draperstown, 20 nm south-south-west of Coleraine, to visit an associate. He had flown this route several times and normally avoided high ground that lies west and north-west of Draperstown. Weather along the route was generally

overcast between 1,800 and 2,200 ft amsl with light, occasionally heavy, showers, visibility between 5 and 15 km and wind from 210° at 15 kt.

The first leg to Draperstown was uneventful with the exception of a few light showers which the commander avoided. As the aircraft approached Draperstown he could see some heavy showers to the south and east which caused him to alter his course to a clear route to the west and climb the aircraft to 2,050 ft amsl to clear the higher ground.

When the aircraft was about 4 nm west of Draperstown it encountered severe turbulence, windshear and rain

which resulted in it descending in downdrafts. With full power applied and maintaining 72 kt (the best angle of climb speed) the aircraft continued to descend. Unable to climb above the terrain ahead, the commander made a forced landing into the surrounding dense coniferous forest.

After the initial impact the aircraft decelerated slowly and rolled left as it descended through the trees, coming to rest on the forest floor. The occupants vacated the aircraft after selecting off the fuel and electrical systems. The passenger suffered mild bruising and the pilot was uninjured.

Manufacturer's comments

The manufacturer commented that they do not publish climb performance figures but the actual rate of climb at MTOW, as recorded during the official Flight Test Report, was 870 ft/min.

Commander's comments

The commander commented that he had taken delivery of the aircraft about 2 months prior to the accident. During that time he and other pilots noticed that it achieved a climb rate of approximately 400 ft/min. He added that he believed virtually all other amphibious Maule MX-7 aircraft had larger engines, affording better climb performance.