

Fokker F27 Mark 500, G-JEAG

AAIB Bulletin No: 9/99 Ref: EW/G99/05/32 Category: 1.1

Aircraft Type and Registration: Fokker F27 Mark 500, G-JEAG

No & Type of Engines: 2 Rolls-Royce Dart 532-7 turboprop engines

Year of Manufacture: 1981

Date & Time (UTC): 26 May 1999 at 0618 hrs

Location: 6 nm south east of Ringa

Type of Flight: Public Transport (Passenger)

Persons on Board: Crew - 3 - Passengers - 15

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Nil

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 33 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 4,000 hours (of which 500 were on type)

Last 90 days - 100 hours

Last 28 days - 60 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and investigation report from the operator

After take off from Belfast the captain noticed a smell, which was initially associated with an earlier fuel spillage. After checking cabin and flightdeck heating, and whilst passing FL80 in the climb, the captain saw and smelt smoke between himself and the left panel switches. He called "smoke in the cockpit", and both pilots donned their masks and performed memory drills.

The captain called for the cockpit heater to be switched off and tried to identify the type of smoke. The smoke disappeared shortly afterwards, although the smell lingered. An emergency was declared as a precaution, and the aircraft was diverted back to Belfast where it landed normally, without any further problems.

The defect apparently disappeared when the cabin heater was switched off. The electrical wiring was inspected on the captain's side, and engine ground runs were carried out. These checks were satisfactory, with no smoke reported, so the defect was cleared. The problem then reoccurred and

was recorded as an Acceptable Deferred Defect. This was cleared on 4 June by replacing the cockpit heater, in which a burnt out heater element had caused a burning smell.

A search of the CAA Mandatory Occurrence Report (MOR) database revealed one other instance of smoke from a cockpit heater element.