

No: 10/83

Ref: EW/G83/06/04

Aircraft type and registration:	Piper PA 25-235 Pawnee G-BGPO (light single engined fixed wing aircraft)
Year of manufacture:	1978
Date and time (GMT):	4 June 1983, 1815 hrs
Location:	1 mile east of Latchington, Essex
Type of flight:	Aerial application
Persons on board:	Crew -- 1 Passengers -- Nil
Injuries:	Crew -- Nil Passengers -- Nil
Nature of damage:	The aircraft was substantially damaged, approximately 1 acre of the crop was damaged.
Commander's Licence:	Commercial Pilot's Licence (New Zealand) with United Kingdom validation.
Commander's Age:	40 years
Commander's total flying experience:	10028 hours (of which 1120 were on type)

The pilot was engaged in crop spraying operations applying fungicide to an irregular shaped wheat field that was traversed by high tension electricity cables. Because of the proximity of trees an area of wheat had been missed in his earlier runs and he had planned a final run to spray this area by flying under the electricity wires and then to climb up over the trees. At the last moment he decided that there was insufficient clearance for this manoeuvre and he executed a hard right turn which resulted in the right wing tip touching the crop.

The aircraft cartwheeled and the fuselage hit the ground backwards. The pilot, who was not wearing a protective helmet, was saved from a serious whiplash injury by the rear head restraint fitted to his seat.