

No: 12/92

Ref: EW/G92/10/04

Category: 1b

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-23-250 Aztec, G-ITTU
No & Type of Engines: 2 Lycoming TIO-540-C1A piston engines
Year of Manufacture: 1974
Date & Time (UTC): 16 October 1992 at 1530 hrs
Location: Andrewsfield Airfield, Essex
Type of Flight: Private
Persons on Board: Crew - 2 Passengers - 1
Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None
Nature of Damage: Minor damage to left wing
Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age: 68 years
Commander's Flying Experience: 20,000 hours (of which 500 were on type)
Last 90 days - 60 hours
Last 28 days - 20 hours
Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and subsequent enquiries by AAIB

After take-off for a short engine test flight the landing gear retraction, and indications, were normal. On return to the circuit, after a landing gear **DOWN** selection, the left main gear green light did not come on, however the light test function showed the bulb to be serviceable. The landing gear was recycled several times without effect, the selector lever returned to neutral after each selection showing that hydraulic pressure was available. The emergency lowering procedure, including the application of positive g also proved to be ineffective. A low flypast showed that the nose and right main gear were down, but that the left main gear was up, with the doors closed.

The left engine propeller was then feathered and motored to the horizontal position. A final fruitless attempt was made to get the gear down using the hydraulic hand pump. Partial flap was lowered on the final approach using the hand pump and the aircraft was landed on the right main wheel using aileron and rudder to maintain directional control. During the roll-out the right engine propeller was also feathered and both engines were secured. The left wing was lowered gently to the ground as aileron control diminished and gentle right brake used for limited directional control.

The left main gear doors failed to open because of a seized bearing in one of the gear door actuator tube assemblies. The bearing was in a dirty condition, probably in part due to operation from a grass strip.