

Aircraft Type and Registration: Montgomery Bensen, G-BPMG

No & Type of Engines: 1 Rotax 532 piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1988

Date & Time (UTC): 6 December 1991 at 1210 hrs

Location: Crail Airfield, Fife, Scotland

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - Minor Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Damage to main rotors, propeller and airframe

Commander's Licence: Student Pilot

Commander's Age: 44 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 37 hours (of which 18 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and additional telephone enquiries by the AAIB

The pilot had completed a medical to become a student pilot in 1987 and purchased the aircraft in kit form from the manufacturer in 1988. In August 1989 the aircraft was test flown and a permit to fly, valid for one month, was issued, but the aircraft was not flown by the pilot due to the unavailability of type instructors in the UK. In September 1991 the pilot flew 18 hours under instruction on a Parsons Tandem Trainer Gyrocopter in Florida with the intention of returning to Florida in January 1992 to continue his training. It was suggested by his instructor in the United States, that before his return he should practice main wheel taxiing in his own machine to improve his handling ability.

On the 6 December 1991 the pilot, watched by a colleague, carried out a series of main wheel only taxiing exercises along the dissused tarmac runway at Crail airfield. This involved taxiing with sufficient speed to raise the nose wheel from the ground and balancing the aircraft on its main wheels alone. The pilot reported that during one such practice the aircraft became inadvertently airborne and with insufficient runway available to land straight ahead he elected to fly a tight left hand circuit at a height of 70 feet to land back on the runway. At a height of some 20 feet, as the aircraft approached the surface, it became unstable, descended and veered to the right causing the rotor blades to strike the ground. The aircraft came to rest on its right side with the pilot suffering from a broken leg. At the

