

Sikorsky S76B, G-UKLM

AAIB Bulletin No: 3/97 Ref: EW/G97/01/07 Category: 2.2

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Sikorsky S76B, G-UKLM
No & Type of Engines:	2 Pratt & Whitney PT6B-36A turboshaft engines
Year of Manufacture:	1987
Date & Time (UTC):	9 January 1997 at 0931 hrs
Location:	Nr Clipper
Type of Flight:	Public Transport
Persons on Board:	Crew - 2 - Passengers - 9
Injuries:	Crew - None - Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	None
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	30 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	2,900 hours (of which 540 were on type) Last 90 days - 99 hours Last 28 days - 33 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The helicopter was en route from Norwich Airport to the 'Schooner' platform with 2 crew and 9 passengers on board. The weather conditions at the time were visibility 10 km, broken cloud at 1,300 feet, surface wind of 085°/20 kt and a temperature of +1°C.

During the descent from 3,000 to 1,000 feet the Fire Warning on No 2 engine illuminated for one second. The emergency checklist was not initiated but the engine instruments were monitored and showed no sign of any abnormality. Three minutes later the warning re-occurred, again for one second and again all engine indications were normal. The crew then discussed the options should the warning be repeated and decided that, if that were to happen, they would divert to the 'Clipper' platform, 14 miles downwind from their current position.

The Fire Warning for No 2 engine then flashed on and off repeatedly with a reducing interval between each warning and an increasing duration of warning light illumination until the warning was continuous. Both pilots thought that they could smell burning and so a turn towards the

'Clipper' was initiated, the No 2 engine was shutdown, the emergency checklist initiated and a 'MAYDAY' transmitted, at 0931 hrs, to Anglia Radar. The radar controller alerted the Distress and Diversion (D and D) cell at the London Air Traffic Control Centre (LATCC) and HM Coastguard as well as vectoring two other helicopters in the local area towards the 'Clipper' to assist if necessary.

The crew fired both extinguisher bottles into the No 2 engine but the fire warning continued. By now the helicopter was 10 to 12 miles from the Clipper heading towards a surface vessel. The crew, however, decided to continue towards the Clipper to carry out a single engine landing in preference to a ditching. The 'Clipper' was contacted by the crew, made aware of the situation, and were asked to observe the No 2 engine during their arrival. No fire was reported by the deck crew, landing clearance was obtained, and a successful landing, at 0941 hrs, was carried out.

Two licensed engineers from the operator were flown to the platform where they inspected the helicopter. The two fire extinguisher bottles were replaced. The lower No 2 Flame Detector was found to be unserviceable and both the lower and upper Flame Detectors were replaced. The system was then tested, found to be serviceable and the aircraft was released for flight.