

Aircraft: Piper PA31 Navajo G-MDAS (twin engine light aircraft)

Year of manufacture: 1974

Date and time (GMT): 29 October 1982 at 1705 hrs

Location: Cambridge Airport

Type of flight: Revenue passenger

Persons on board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 4

Injuries: Crew - Nil Passengers - Nil

Nature of damage: Minor damage to undersurface of aircraft and propellers

Commander's Licence: Commercial Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 46 years

Commander's total flying experience: 10,500 hours (of which 520 hours were on type)

The aircraft was on a flight from Cambridge Airport to Le Bourget. On the approach to Le Bourget, the left undercarriage downlock green light did not illuminate, giving instead a red warning light and a warning horn upon reduction of power.

The pilot elected to return to Cambridge, where a flypast of the tower showed that all the undercarriages appeared to be down, although the cockpit indications still indicated that the left undercarriage was not locked down. The pilot decided to perform a wheels-up landing on runway 24, which was carried out successfully, the aircraft coming to rest 550 metres after touch-down with only relatively minor damage.

Subsequent testing of the undercarriage retraction system showed that there was an intermittent fault in the downlock indication microswitch.

---