

**ACCIDENT**

<b>Aircraft Type and Registration:</b>	Cameron Z-375 balloon, G-VBFS
<b>No &amp; Type of Engines:</b>	None
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	2009 (Serial no: 11216)
<b>Date &amp; Time (UTC):</b>	4 April 2014 at 1820 hrs
<b>Location:</b>	Near Kendal, Cumbria
<b>Type of Flight:</b>	Commercial Air Transport (Passenger)
<b>Persons on Board:</b>	Crew - 1                      Passengers - 16
<b>Injuries:</b>	Crew - None                      Passengers - None
<b>Nature of Damage:</b>	Several damaged flying wires and damage to the 'scoop'. Severed electrical power lines
<b>Commander's Licence:</b>	Commercial Pilot's Licence (Balloon)
<b>Commander's Age:</b>	52 years
<b>Commander's Flying Experience:</b>	2,799 hours (of which 250 were on type) Last 90 days - 3 hours Last 28 days - 4 hours
<b>Information Source:</b>	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The flight had been conducted in fine conditions, with good visibility. The pilot began to search for a landing area and identified what appeared to be a suitable field about 2 nm away, near the town of Levens. As the balloon approached the field, its speed was about 7 kt and reducing. The pilot observed electrical power lines on two sides of the field, before the intended landing site. With the passengers in their landing positions, the pilot descended over the near corner of his chosen field, beyond the power lines he had seen.

With the balloon about 3 m above the ground, the pilot saw more power lines immediately ahead, running diagonally across the balloon's path at the height of the balloon's 'scoop'. He operated a control line to rapidly deflate the envelope but the power lines struck the balloon about 1 m below the top of the 'scoop', breaking in the process. The balloon's flying wires and scoop were damaged but there were no injuries.

The pilot had checked the field for power lines during the approach but had not seen any. He observed that the cables were very thin and the supporting poles had been obscured.