

No: 9/88

Ref: EW/G88/07/03

Category: 1b

Aircraft Type and Registration: Piper PA-23-250, G-AWER

No & Type of Engines: 2 Lycoming IO-540-C4B5 piston engines

Year of Manufacture: 1968

Date and Time (UTC): 6 July 1988 at 1213 hrs

Location: Belfast International (Aldergrove) Airport

Type of Flight: Aerial survey/photography

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 2

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Damage to nose and propellers

Commander's Licence: Commercial Pilot's Licence with Instrument Ratings

Commander's Age: 56 years

Commander's Total Flying Experience: 12,632 hours (of which 850 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

On the two days before the accident it was reported that the central green light ("nose landing gear down and locked") was intermittent in operation during gear down selections and taxiing.

On the accident flight, when the landing gear was selected down for landing, the nose landing gear light failed to illuminate. The selector lever was returned to "NEUTRAL" while the pilot selected flap and was then again placed in the "DOWN" position. The nose landing gear light still failed to illuminate but the leg appeared to be extended when it was viewed through the inspection mirror on the left engine cowling. The selector lever was again cycled through "NEUTRAL" and "DOWN" when full flap was selected but the light remained out.

The nose landing gear collapsed during the landing roll causing damage to the aircraft nose and propellers.

An engineering inspection found no mechanical failure or misrigging in the nose landing gear but the downlock pivot was found to be slightly stiff. The pivot has no grease nipple and can only be greased on assembly or lubricated subsequently by oiling.