

No: 1/85

Ref: EW/G84/07/27

Aircraft type and registration: Piper PA 44-180 Seminole G-TWIN (light twin-engined, fixed wing aircraft)

Year of Manufacture: 1978

Date and time (GMT): 29 July 1984 at 1545 hrs

Location: Leavesden Aerodrome

Type of flight: Training

Persons on board: Crew — 2 Passengers — Nil

Injuries: Crew — Nil Passengers — N/A

Nature of damage: Propellers bent, engines shock loaded, nose under surface scraped

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence, Instrument, Night and Full Instructor's ratings

Commander's Age: 38 years

Commander's total flying experience: 869 hrs (of which 112 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report form completed by the commander.

The aircraft was being used for multi-engine training. The pilot under training had a total of 1245 flying hours including 1 hour 30 mins on type and was familiar with the Piper Arrow, which has a similar retractable undercarriage system.

Following some upper air flying three 'touch and go' circuits were performed using concrete runway 34 at Leavesden before the final approach to land. The reported wind was 210°, 15 to 28 kt. On each approach it was checked that 'three greens' were visible and that the nosegear could be seen in the extended position in a mirror which is fitted to the port engine nacelle.

After the last approach a normal touchdown was achieved on the main wheels but when the nosewheel was lowered on to the runway the leg retracted and the propellers hit the ground. The engines stopped and the aircraft skidded to a halt.

An engineering investigation found no malfunction of the undercarriage operating system but excessive play was found at the main noseleg pivots and the central pivot bolt in the drag link was found to be bent.