

## ACCIDENT

<b>Aircraft Type and Registration:</b>	Pegasus XL-Q, G-MWLM	
<b>No &amp; Type of Engines:</b>	1 Rotax 462 HP piston engine	
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	1990	
<b>Date &amp; Time (UTC):</b>	17 April 2010 at 1550 hrs	
<b>Location:</b>	Hunsdon Airfield, Hertfordshire	
<b>Type of Flight:</b>	Training	
<b>Persons on Board:</b>	Crew - 1	Passengers <sup>1</sup> - 1
<b>Injuries:</b>	Crew - None	Passengers - 1 (Serious)
<b>Nature of Damage:</b>	Damage to nosewheel main strut, control bar, wing, pylon and front strut	
<b>Commander's Licence:</b>	National Private Pilot's Licence	
<b>Commander's Age:</b>	43 years	
<b>Commander's Flying Experience:</b>	110 hours (of which 106 were on type) Last 90 days - 10 hours Last 28 days - 5 hours	
<b>Information Source:</b>	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and further enquiries made by the AAIB	

### Synopsis

The commander, who was not a qualified flying instructor, allowed a student pilot with 26 hours total flying experience to operate the controls throughout the flight. The aircraft dropped from a height of approximately 10 ft onto the runway while landing, resulting in serious injuries to the student pilot.

### History of the flight

The student, who had 26 hours total flying experience, was hoping shortly to undertake a General Skills Test and had gone to his flying club on the day of the accident to practise general handling. He described the weather conditions as "good" with a light westerly

wind of about 5 kt and a temperature of 10°C. His usual instructor was not present but another was available to provide supervision.

The student first undertook a solo flight in his aircraft, returning to the airfield after about an hour for an uneventful landing. The supervising instructor then suggested that the student take one of the club's qualified pilots with him on a second flight. This pilot, who occupied the rear seat, was not an instructor and

#### Footnote

<sup>1</sup> The "passenger" was a student pilot, but could not operate in that capacity because the commander was not a qualified flying instructor.

was intended to accompany the student only to provide advice, but was nevertheless the nominated commander of the aircraft. Although the aircraft was fitted with training bars, allowing it to be flown from either seat, the student reported that only he (the student) handled the aircraft during the flight.

The aircraft departed at 1450 hrs and the student again practised general handling before returning to the airfield. He reported that he flew a powered approach to Runway 26 at an airspeed of 55-60 mph and began flaring at a height of about 10 ft. The aircraft then suddenly dropped, landing heavily on its rear wheels and quickly rotating onto its nosewheel with a force sufficient to break the structural base tube between the two pilots' seats. The rear seat occupant and engine then fell forwards onto the student, causing multiple fractures to one of the student's legs and dislocating an ankle. The rear seat occupant was uninjured.

The student believed he encountered a change in wind direction or "pocket" of turbulence, causing the aircraft to drop.

### **Oversight**

Student pilots can only operate an aircraft whilst accompanied by a suitably qualified instructor, or solo when they have been deemed sufficiently competent. Instructors undergo training not only to provide proper guidance to students, but also to recognise problems and take corrective action before they develop too far. A student flying with a pilot who is not a suitably qualified instructor might expect a level of oversight that an accompanying pilot may not be able to provide, and the absence of appropriate intervention may result in undesirable consequences.