

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-46-310P Malibu, N9122N	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Continental TSIO-520 SER piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1988	
Date & Time (UTC):	19 April 2009 at 1100 hrs	
Location:	Guernsey Airport	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 2	Passengers - 2
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Minor damage to right landing gear wheel cover	
Commander's Licence:	Commercial Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	64 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	2,038 hours (of which 1,250 were on type) Last 90 days - 16 hours Last 28 days - 5 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

During a normal touchdown, the nosewheel steering connecting rod fractured at its attachment to the steering arm. This was due to abnormal bending loads caused by the seizure of a bush in its end-fitting. The aircraft yawed violently to the left, prompting an immediate go-around, during which the nosewheel was observed from the ground to be offset by about 45°. During the subsequent landing the aircraft again veered left and struck a runway light, causing minor damage to the right wheel cover.

History of the flight

After an uneventful flight from Oxford, the aircraft was vectored for an ILS approach to Runway 09 at Guernsey; the wind was reported as 15 kt from 040°.

The landing gear was lowered, apparently normally, and the three green landing gear down-and-locked lights illuminated. After crossing the threshold at 90 kt, the aircraft touched down on the main wheels without incident but, as the speed decreased and the nosewheel came into contact with the runway, a screeching noise was heard and the aircraft yawed violently to the left.

Full power was applied immediately to initiate a go-around and, once airborne, the tower was appraised of the situation and a request made for a low fly-past and visual inspection. As the aircraft turned downwind, the tower informed the pilot that the nosewheel appeared to be offset by about 45° and advised him not to attempt a retraction. After the offset had been

confirmed during a low pass down the runway, and after unsuccessful attempts to realign the nosewheel by rocking and yawing the aircraft, the pilot advised the tower of his intention to make a short field landing approach at the lowest possible safe speed and to hold the nosewheel off the runway for as long as possible.

After waiting for a departing aircraft to clear the runway, the passengers were briefed for an emergency landing and a low-level short-field approach and landing was executed, crossing the threshold at 80 kt. After touching down on the main wheels, the nosewheel was held off the ground for as long as possible but as soon as it contacted the runway the aircraft again

yawed violently to the left. Directional control was retained only marginally through asymmetric braking. After coming to rest, undamaged except for some light scratching to the leading edge of a landing gear door that had struck and broken a glass runway light, the shutdown procedures were completed and all occupants vacated the aircraft safely using the main door.

Subsequent investigation identified an overload failure of the threaded section of the steering actuation/damper rod end-fitting, at its aft end attachment to the steering arm, caused by a seizure of the 'rose joint' bearing element into its housing.