

No: 7/91

Ref: EW/G91/02/03

Category: 1c

**Aircraft Type and Registration:** Auster 5J1, G-AIZZ  
**No & Type of Engines:** 1 Blackburn Cirrus Minor 2 piston engine  
**Year of Manufacture:** 1946  
**Date & Time (UTC):** 14 February 1991 at 1606 hrs  
**Location:** Whitehall Farm, Watton-at-Stone, Hertfordshire  
**Type of Flight:** Private  
**Persons on Board:** Crew - 1 Passengers - 1  
**Injuries:** Crew - Serious Passengers - Serious  
**Nature of Damage:** Substantial to left wing and fuselage  
**Commander's Licence:** Private Pilot's Licence with IMC and Night ratings  
**Commander's Age:** 47 years  
**Commander's Flying Experience:** 538 hours (of which 143 were on type)  
**Information Source:** Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft took off from a farm strip at approximately 1600 hours for a local flight . The weather was fine with a light south westerly wind, a temperature of +1°C and the ground was snow covered. After take-off, the aircraft flew in the local area for some minutes observed by witnesses at heights which they estimated between 50 feet to 500 feet. The engine was then heard to 'splutter' and the aircraft began to descend. When close to the ground, the engine was heard to regain power and the aircraft began to climb. It then struck some high voltage power cables which severed the left wing. The cables were approximately 20 feet above ground level. The aircraft, minus the left wing, came to rest in a snow covered field some 100 metres beyond the power cables. The propeller showed little sign of rotation at impact. Both occupants were wearing full restraint harness which held on impact. There was no fire but both occupants sustained serious injuries, mainly to the face and head, although the pilot also suffered chest and pelvic injuries. Neither the pilot nor his passenger have any recollection of the circumstances of the accident.