

Aerostar SA Yak-52, G-BWVR

AAIB Bulletin No: 1/2001

Ref: EW/G2000/10/14 - Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Aerostar SA Yak-52, G-BWVR

No & Type of Engines: 1 Ivchenko Vedeneyev M-14P piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1987

Date & Time (UTC): 21 October 2000 at 1640 hrs

Location: Barton Airfield, Manchester

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 2 - Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Extensive to propeller and flaps

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 38 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 340 hours (of which 40 were on type)
Last 90 days - 12 hours
Last 28 days - 5 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot of the Yak 52, which was not equipped with a radio, had departed from Manchester (Barton) and carried out a fifteen minute local flight. The weather was reported as surface wind 270°/7 kt, visibility greater than 10 km and scattered medium level cloud. An overhead rejoin of the airfield was made from 1,500 feet followed by a descent on the dead side of Runway 27 north, which was the 'winter' runway. There were four other aircraft in the circuit and the pilot positioned his aircraft on the right hand downwind leg. He carried out the pre-landing checks, which included the lowering of the landing gear. The pilot confirmed that the landing gear was down and locked and the duty ATCO reported seeing the landing gear to be down.

On final approach there were two microlight aircraft ahead and the pilot decided to carry out a 'go around'. He retracted the landing gear and flaps and climbed to 800 feet QFE and turned right onto the downwind leg. The pilot thought he had once again lowered the landing gear but could not clearly recall whether he had seen the three green indicator lights. At the end of the base leg the flaps were lowered.

The pilot reported that on the final approach there was strong glare from the low winter sun almost directly along the line of the runway and he lost sight of the aircraft ahead of him which were also on final approach. As he approached the threshold he saw the other aircraft ahead clearing the runway and he continued his approach to land. The duty ATCO saw that the landing gear was still retracted and shone a steady red light at the aircraft using the Aldis lamp available to him. The aircraft flared at the normal height, the propeller blade tips struck the ground and the aircraft sank onto the retracted wheels and extended flap.

The airfield Rescue and Fire Fighting Service (RFFS) were alerted by ATC and responded immediately. Both aircraft occupants were uninjured and exited by sliding back the canopy in the normal manner. The RFFS applied a foam blanket to the wings and immediate ground area as a precautionary measure.

The pilot concluded that he had become preoccupied with maintaining a safe separation from the slower traffic ahead, which, when combined with the difficulty in seeing into the low sun, had distracted him from carrying out the check of the landing gear. The lack of radio prevented him from receiving any audible warning from ATC and he did not see the red light due to the glare of the sun.