

AAIB Bulletin No: 9/95 **Ref:** EW/G95/07/07 **Category:** 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Cessna 152, G-BOAI

No & Type of Engines: 1 Lycoming O-235-L2C piston engine

Year of Manufacture: 1978

Date & Time (UTC): 8 July 1995 at 1705 hrs

Location: Bourne Farm, Borough Green, Kent

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 1

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None

Nature of Damage: Slight damage to engine mounts

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 54 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 69 hours (all on type)
Last 90 days - 9 hours
Last 28 days - 5 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot had hired the aircraft, which was operated by a flying club, for a day trip to Le Touquet, in France. Prior to departure from Biggin Hill, the pilot was informed by a club officer that the aircraft had 98 litres of fuel aboard, which was sufficient for 4½ hours endurance. When filling in the customs VAT reclaim form, the refuelling log was checked to support the 98 litre quantity. During the pre-flight inspection of the aircraft, the pilot checked the contents visually by removing the filler caps and concluded that the fuel state appeared to agree with the documentation. However, the fuel gauges gave different indications, but he attributed this to gauge unreliability.

The flight to Le Touquet was uneventful and included 1 hour 20 minutes of engine running time. The pilot conducted another pre-flight inspection before departing for the return journey, and he concluded that the indications were consistent with the initial indications minus the fuel used on the outbound flight.

The return flight progressed normally until the engine suddenly lost power whilst flying at some 2,000 feet near Borough Green in Kent. This occurred some 50 minutes after departure from Le Touquet. The pilot found that the engine could be made to produce power in short bursts by

pumping the throttle. No other remedial action was effective. Realising that a forced landing was necessary, the pilot informed London Flight Information Service of the situation. He then selected the largest available field and landed into wind with 30° flap. The aircraft came to a rapid halt in standing corn, sustaining slight damage in the process. Neither occupant was injured.

The pilot was subsequently shown the aircraft flight log which indicated that the aircraft had been flown three times since being refuelled. This vital information had not been passed to the pilot prior to his flight. The club official who had overseen the flight preparations had not been on duty the previous day and was apparently unaware of the flights made subsequent to the refuelling. The pilot has stated that his assessment of the fuel state during his pre-flight inspections had been conditioned by the documentary evidence that the aircraft had been refuelled with adequate quantities for the intended flight.

Note This month's Bulletin also includes a report of another accident involving a Reims Cessna F152, G-BJWH, which force landed nearby on the same afternoon after running out of fuel. This aircraft was also based at Biggin Hill and was on a return flight from Le Touquet. It has been established that the circumstances surrounding these accidents were entirely unrelated.