

AAIB Bulletin No: 9/95

Ref: EW/G95/07/12

Category: 3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Thunder AX9-120, G-BUAT

No & Type of Engines: 2 "burners"

Year of Manufacture: 1992

Date & Time (UTC): 16 July 1995 at 0700 hrs

Location: Red Moss, Near Bolton, Lancashire

Type of Flight: Public Transport

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 4

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - 1 Serious

Nature of Damage: Nil

Commander's Licence: Commercial Pilot's Licence (Balloons)

Commander's Age: 46 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 650 hours (of which 400 were on type)
Last 90 days - 23 hours
Last 28 days - 15 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The pilot took off at 0540 hrs UTC in still wind conditions and the flight was conducted at 2,000 feet agl in smooth conditions with a cruise wind of approximately 10 kt. Prior to takeoff, the passengers had been fully briefed and, in accordance with his normal practice, midway through the flight the pilot made his passengers demonstrate the landing position. For the landing, with an estimated surface wind of 10 kt, the pilot made a normal approach into a field with long grass. After touchdown, the balloon was dragged some 50 yards and came to rest against the far side of a wide ditch; this ditch was at right angles to the balloon's path and had not been seen because of the long grass. A female passenger complained that she had hurt her foot during the landing but, at the time, declined any treatment; the balloon operators were subsequently informed that she had broken a bone in her foot.