

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Vans RV-8, G-HILZ	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Superior XP-IO-360-B1AA2 piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	2007	
Date & Time (UTC):	21 April 2012 at 1600 hrs	
Location:	Private airstrip near Stevenage, Hertfordshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Damage to left landing gear, fuselage, left wingtip and left tailplane. Minor damage to hangar	
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	48 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	12,713 hours (of which more than 750 were on type) Last 90 days - 112 hours Last 28 days - 53 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The pilot encountered unexpectedly poor braking effect after landing on the grass airstrip. He was unable to prevent the aircraft over-running the strip and colliding with a small hangar at its end. The pilot was uninjured.

(1,720 ft) strip. The pilot applied the wheel brakes but, although feedback from the pedals appeared normal, almost no retardation was felt.

Description of the event

The pilot was landing the aircraft at a private airstrip (orientated 05/23) following a flight from Duxford Airfield when the accident occurred. The weather was generally favourable with calm conditions, but a recent shower had left the grass runway wet. The pilot made a normal approach in a south-westerly direction, achieving the target approach speed and touching down at the intended point along the approximately 525 m

The pilot tried to improve braking through aerodynamic means and varying brake application, but with little effect. As a runway overrun became likely, the pilot attempted to steer the aircraft away from the small hangar building at the end of the strip. This was only partially successful in that, while the aircraft's heading altered about 80° to the right, its ground track changed only slightly. The aircraft encountered the concrete apron and grass reinforcement area before its left wing struck the side of the hangar. The aircraft came to a stop

on the small apron and the pilot, who was uninjured, made the aircraft safe and vacated it.

The pilot had flown from the strip for a number of years in varying conditions and had not known this or similar aircraft to encounter problems with the available landing distance. The aircraft's listed performance figures predicted a landing roll of between 300 and 500 ft, which the pilot felt was realistic in favourable conditions. He observed that, taking into account conservative allowances for the wet grass, slight down slope of the field, conditions of the day, and applying

the recommended safety factor of 1.43¹, the aircraft's predicated landing roll would be 1,030 ft. In fact, the actual landing roll until contact with the building was about 1,350 ft.

The pilot further observed that the recent rain had fallen after an extended dry period, and thought that this, together with the particular characteristics of the local clay sub-soil, could have played a part in the unusually poor braking effect. The pilot intended highlighting his experience in the conditions to other users of the strip in future.

Footnote

¹ See CAA Safety Sense Leaflet 7 '*Aeroplane Performance*'.