

No: 9/91

Ref: EW/G91/07/29

Category: 1c

**Aircraft Type and Registration:** Reims Cessna FA150K, G-BUTT

**No & Type of Engines:** 1 Continental O-200-A piston engine

**Year of Manufacture:** 1970

**Date & Time (UTC):** 20 July 1991 at 1530 hrs

**Location:** Earls Colne airfield, Essex

**Type of Flight:** Private

**Persons on Board:** Crew - 1                      Passengers - 1

**Injuries:** Crew - None                      Passengers - None

**Nature of Damage:** Nose landing gear, engine mountings,  
bulkhead and propeller

**Commander's Licence:** Private Pilot's Licence

**Commander's Age:** 39 years

**Commander's Flying Experience:** Approximately 2,000 hours  
(of which around 400 were on type)

**Information Source:** Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was on a test flight after minor rigging adjustments to the ailerons. At approximately 2300 ft the engine surged and lost power. A turn was initiated towards a local airfield, the carburettor heat was applied and the throttle fully opened. After losing approximately 500 ft in height and having had no response to the application of carburettor heat or full throttle, a glide approach was initiated towards the local airfield and a Mayday call transmitted on their frequency. The engine then stopped completely and it became apparent that the aircraft would not clear some high voltage cables ahead. The aircraft was therefore turned away from the cables, but the only fields available were full of standing crop. After briefing the passenger, a successful forced landing was carried out using full flap into a field of standing crop. The aircraft stopped within 15 ft and inverted, but both occupants were able to escape unaided.

The pilot assessed that the cause of the accident was fuel starvation. Although both fuel tanks had been dip-checked before the flight, and when the engine failed both fuel gauges had indicated 1/4 full, there was no evidence of fuel apparent at the accident site and the tanks appeared empty.