

Reims Cessna FR172F, G-DRAM, 1 May 1999

AAIB Bulletin No: 4/2002 Ref: EW/G1999/05/47 Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Reims Cessna FR172F, G-DRAM	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Continental Motors IO-360-D	
Year of Manufacture:	1968	
Date & Time (UTC):	1 May 1999 at a time unknown	
Location:	Loch Diabagas Airde, near Loch Torridon, Scotland	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Floats damaged beyond economic repair plus distortion of fuselage underside skin	
Commander's Licence:	Basic Commercial Pilots Licence	
Commander's Age:	40 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	1,645 hours (of which 25 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 28 hours	
	Last 28 days - 16 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

This accident was not reported to the AAIB until January 2002. The pilot was attempting a turning take-off to the right from the surface of Loch Diabagas Airde which is some 1500 metres from Loch Diabaig, which is itself part of Loch Torridon.

Loch Diabagas Airde (*jpg 16kb*) is an oval shaped water feature 450 feet amsl, with the longer axis running 1,100 metres north-east/south-west and approximately 500 metres at its widest point. It is surrounded by high ground, particularly to the north-east, which was the intended take-off direction. The weather was good with a light easterly wind of 5 to 10 kt with visibility in excess of 10 km and no cloud. Prior to commencing the take-off, the pilot carried out a thorough visual inspection of the intended take-off run and the manoeuvring area and confirmed that they were clear of obstacles. The technique was to carry out a 180° right turn from west to east whilst

accelerating across the surface of the loch until the aircraft rose up on the 'step' of the floats, and then continue the acceleration into wind to take off from the water surface.

The take-off run was commenced close to the south shore at the western end of the Loch. Take-off flap was selected and a moderate level of power applied. The aircraft accelerated and the pilot applied right rudder to initiate the turn into wind whilst maintaining the wings level with right wing down aileron. He realised that the turn was not tight enough to achieve the intended path and decided to abandon the take-off by closing the throttle. The aircraft rapidly decelerated but struck some submerged rocks on the north west shoreline of the loch. The aircraft came to rest on the rocks and remained upright despite the damage to the floats. The pilot shut down the aircraft in the normal manner and vacated through the port side main door.

The pilot concluded that the cause of the accident was his lack of familiarity with the water handling characteristics of the C172 floatplane. He had previously operated the PA 18 Cub floatplane which had a tighter radius of turn.