

No: 8/84

Ref: EW/G84/06/15

Aircraft type and registration: Hiller UH 12E G-AVKY (light single engine helicopter)

Year of manufacture: 1961

Date and time (GMT): 26 June 1984 at 0950 hrs

Location: Bucklebury, near Newbury, Berkshire

Type of flight: Aerial Application

Persons on board: Crew — 1 Passengers — Nil

Injuries: Crew — Minor Passengers — N/A

Nature of damage: Aircraft severely damaged

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 54 years

Commander's total flying experience: 2152 hours, fixed wing 8338 hours, rotary wing (of which 374 hours were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was spraying a 34 acre wheat field which the pilot had previously examined from the ground and overflown on a reconnaissance flight earlier in the day. A 17 KVA power line ran in an east/west direction across the centre of the field parallel to a ridge in the fields' surface which lay to the south of the cables. Two lines of 33 KVA cables also crossed the field at right angles to and above the 17 KVA power lines. The pilot planned to fly his first three spraying runs in a north/south direction on the downwind side of the field. In order to avoid spray drifting over the adjacent property he intended to pass under the 17 KVA cables.

The first two runs were completed successfully but on the third run which was from south to north the pilot realised as the aircraft crossed the ridge that he had to keep well down to give adequate clearance under the cables. The aircraft brushed the top of the crop where subsequent examination revealed a slight rise in its level, causing it to pitch nose-down into the ground. It somersaulted before coming to rest upright on its skids. The pilot, whose harness was locked, was wearing an ex-Service flying suit and helmet and escaped with minor grazing.