

ACCIDENT

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| Aircraft Type and Registration: | Robin DR400/180 Regent, G-ETIV | |
| No & Type of Engines: | 1 Lycoming O-360-A3A piston engine | |
| Year of Manufacture: | 2000 (Serial no: 2454) | |
| Date & Time (UTC): | 2 September 2014 at 1203 hrs | |
| Location: | Spilstead Farm Airstrip, East Sussex | |
| Type of Flight: | Private | |
| Persons on Board: | Crew - 1 | Passengers - None |
| Injuries: | Crew - None | Passengers - N/A |
| Nature of Damage: | Nose landing gear collapsed, propeller and cowling damaged, minor damage to the left flap | |
| Commander's Licence: | Private Pilot's Licence | |
| Commander's Age: | 73 years | |
| Commander's Flying Experience: | 698 hours (of which all were on type) Last 90 days - 29 hours Last 28 days - 7 hours | |
| Information Source: | Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot | |

Spilstead Farm Airstrip is a private grass airfield with a single runway of about 700 m in length, orientated 15/33. Due to the runway slope, arrivals are typically from the south. The pilot had landed at Spilstead Farm once before, without incident, and had noted that the northern end of the runway was undulating. So, on this flight he intended to touch down near the southern threshold. The weather was good and he selected an aiming point and speed to achieve this but misidentified the threshold. The aircraft touched down approximately 25 m short of the runway, encountered soft ground and the nose landing gear collapsed. The aircraft sustained damage but the pilot was unhurt and vacated it after shutting down.

Spilstead is a private farmstrip and there is no requirement to mark the runway. The accident pilot reported that, on arrival, it was apparent that the surrounding crop had been cut for hay. This led to him mistaking a line in the cut hay for the start of the runway.

CAA Safety Sense Leaflet 12, *Strip Flying*, provides a range of advice for operating from private strips, including assessing the strip.