

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORT

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BRANCH

AIB BULLETIN

Aircraft type & Registration : BEECH BE 55 BARON - 5H - MOP  
Date and Time : 16 APRIL 1996 0700 HRS  
Location : NGWAZI AIRSTRIP - MUFINDI (08° 31'S 35° 10'E)  
Type of Flight : PRIVATE  
Persons on board : 4  
Injuries : NIL  
Nature of damage : NOSE LEG COLLAPSE  
Commander's Licence : CPL  
Commander's total flying : 3900 HRS  
Experience : ON TYPE - 800 HRS

ALL TIMES UTC

The aircraft on a private trip was preparing itself for a trip from Mufindi to Mwadui after WDL Company officials had finished their business the previous day and night.

After leaving the apron the aircraft was backtracking along runway 12 for takeoff. About 400 metres from the threshold of runway 12 the nosegear fell into a hole dug up by some animal or insects and subsequently covered by soft which was not easily discernible from the cockpit. With the nose wheel down the hole a distance of about a foot and half, the aircraft pivoted onto the gear, the nose gear operating rod sheared due to overload, the gear retracted and the aircraft settled onto the nose cone, which was damaged, and as the aircraft nose was settling onto the ground, the propellers hit the soft ground and 2 blades on the engine were slightly bent and one prop on the right engine was twisted slightly clear indication of low power when the incident happened. The pilot secured the aircraft, the 3 passengers and the pilot evacuated the aircraft and subsequently notified the AIB.

This was a survivable accident as it took place during the phase when the aircraft was taxiing slowly along the runway. Had it happened on the take off roll or landing roll, the damage to the aircraft would have been substantial and may be the occupants would have suffered serious injuries.

Ngwazi Airstrip is a grass airstrip of 1200 metres 50 metres wide with a runway of 20 metres width designated 12/30 of unspecified strength walking along the airstrip it was apparent that rats, rodents and antihills are strife in the area, which means it requires constant vigilance on the part of the operator to conduct regular inspections and plug in holes and generally check the strength of the ground.