THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION & TRANSPORT
ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BRANCH

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER
ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BRANCH
P.O. BOX 2819
DAR ES SALAAM

# AIB Bulletin

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| **AIB Bulletin No:** 15 | **Ref:** CAV/ACC/15/00 | | **Category:** 1.2 |
| **Aircraft Type:** | Cessna 404 | **Reg.**5H-ZAY | **Serial No.** 0207 |
| **No & Type of Engines:** | Two Continental GTSIO-520M | | |
| **Year of Manufacture:** | 1978 | | |
| **Date: & Time (UTC):** | 29th November,2000 at 1430 hours | | |
| **Location:** | Likuyu Airstrip, Songea, Tanzania<br>Lat. 10° 19'.40"S Long. 036° 16'.36"E | | |
| **Type of Flight:** | Air Charter | | |
| **Persons on Board.** | **Crew** -1 | **Passengers** - 4 | |
| **Injuries:** | **Crew** - Nil | **Passengers** - Nil | |
| **Nature of Damage:** | Substantial damage to nose landing gear, nose section undersurface and suspected minor damage to the propellers and engines. | | |
| **Commander's Licence:** | ATPL | | |
| **Commander's Age:** | 45 years | | |
| **Commander's Experience** | 14,059 hours of which 4,000 were on type<br><br>**Last 90 days** – 101.0 hrs.<br>**Last 28 days** – 59.0 hrs. | | |
| **Information Source:** | Telephone call from the Operator. | | |

**ALL TIMES UTC**

On 29th November,2000 at 1200 hrs the aircraft, 5H-ZAY took off from Zanzibar Airport with one pilot on board for a pick up at Likuyu Airstrip in Songea/Ruvuma Region. The flight to Likuyu was uneventful and the aircraft landed on runway 25 of Likuyu Old airstrip at 1350 hours.

The aircraft was taxied back to the apron which is almost off the centre of the runway where it was loaded with some cargo and four passengers..

The Bulletin contains facts relating to the accident which have been determined up to the time of issue. This information is published to inform the public and the aviation industry of the general circumstances of the accidents at the preliminary/stage and must necessarily be regarded as tentative and subject to alteration or correction if additional evidence becomes available.

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The runway was wet from heavy rains which had started several days earlier, nevertheless it was not slippery and it was not water-logged. Runway (07/25) has soft soil, scattered patches of low grass with a width of about 20 metres and a length of about 1000 metres. This makes it look like a narrow road in the bush. The airstrip, elevation 2600 feet is unmanned and is owned by Selous Game Reserve.

After the loading the pilot claimed to have walked down the runway to ascertain its condition, which was found to be satisfactory. The aircraft was then taxied to the threshold of runway 07 for the take off roll. At the threshold of runway 07, a 180° turn was initiated to align the aircraft with the centre line ready for take off. At almost 145° into the turn the nose landing gear, which had then rotated to the right stop and its wheel was skidding on the soft soil, collapsed outwards on the left side. Both propellers struck the soft soil and one blade of the left propeller remained embedded in the soil. The aircraft settled on its nose and the mains.

Visual examination of the aircraft damage revealed that the nose section area sustained substantial damage, the propellers on both engines had struck the ground and one blade on the left engine was found loose in the hub and the lock missing.

Further examination of the nose landing gear revealed that the link assembly drag was sheared, the right hand trunion pin dislodged, the left hand gear attachment dubbler and skin torn and the left hand wheel well door twisted.

Reports from Likuyu said that one day before this accident a Pilatus PC 12 transport got stuck in soft soil whilst executing a turn at this airstrip. It had to be pushed out. It subsequently made a successful take-off.

However, this incident was not reported to the AIB and the commander of 5H-ZAY remained unaware of the runway condition. Regulation 3(ii) of Tanzania Air Navigation Regulations (1983) (Investigation of Accidents) requires aircraft operators to notify the Chief Inspector of Accidents any aircraft incidents their occurrence of which could be prevented through publication to other operators.

It is also incumbent upon the commander of the aircraft to ascertain the condition of the destination airstrip before commencing any flight.

The circumstances leading to this accident are being investigated.

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Likuyu Airstrip

Accident aircraft showing failed nose landing gear