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# AIB Bulletin

**AIB No.5** Ref.CAV/CC/5/04 **Category:** 1.2  
**Aircraft Type:** Cessna 421 **Reg.** 5H-PKC **Serial No.** 421-0032  
**No. And type of Engines:** Two Continental GTSIO-520M  
**Year of Manufacture:** 1977  
**Date and Time:** 25 March 2004 at 0530 hours  
**Location:** TPC Airstrip – 18km south of Moshi - Kilimanjaro Region  
**Type of Flight:** Private  
**Persons on Board:** Crew- 1 Passengers - Nil  
**Injuries:** Crew- Nil Passengers - Nil  
**Nature of Damage:** Nose landing gear separated, both main landing gears collapsed, left propeller blades bent, damage observed on left wing, left aileron, both left and right flaps, nose landing gear attachment points, nose landing gear door, bottom fuselage section and cabin door.  
**Commander's Licence:** CPL  
**Commander's Age:** 46 years  
**Commanders Experience:** 4934 hours of which about 231 were on type.  
**Last 90 days:** 135 hours  
**Last 28 days:** hours  
**Information Source:** Telephone call from the operator

ALL TIMES UTC

## History of the Flight

On the evening of 24th March 2004 the pilot of 5H-PKC telephoned Kilimanjaro International Airport Briefing Office to file a Thru-flight plan for 5H-PKC to operate from Moshi, calling at TPC farm and Pemba on its way to Dar es Salaam on the following day.

On 25<sup>th</sup> March 2004 at 0530 hours 5H-PKC took off from Moshi for a VFR flight, as per flight plan, to TPC Airstrip. The pilot was the only occupant. The aircraft was to pick passengers at TPC for a flight to Pemba. The fuel endurance was 0230 hours.

According to the pilot the flight was uneventful from the take-off until touch down at TPC airstrip. The pilot said that after take off from Moshi he turned right in order to take heading for TPC farm. The weather was fine. He called Kilimanjaro Tower and was instructed to report TPC in sight. Before landing at TPC he made a circuit, keeping the runway to his left. He checked the runway for obstructions and the windsock for wind direction. The wind was from southeast. He decided to turn left on downwind base-leg and finals to runway 16. He also said that whilst on finals he made all the pre-landing checks and selected gear down. Everything was fine with “three greens” indicating that the gear was down and locked.

Shortly after touchdown he noticed that the left wing was sinking and at the same time an alarm warning came on. The aircraft started to pull to the left and the pilot remembers kicking the right rudder pedal in order to keep the aircraft on the centre-line of the runway. He did not succeed. The aircraft abruptly turned through almost 140 degrees and came to rest on its belly with the nose pointing 054 degrees. After switching off the electricals, the pilot rushed out. When he saw fumes coming out from the left wing tip he rushed into the aircraft again for the fire extinguisher. However, there was no fire.

On inspecting the runway it was found that there were marks showing that the aircraft touched down about 60 meters beyond the beginning of the runway. After rolling for about 50 meters the left hand propeller started striking the ground. The propeller strike marks were vividly seen and covering initially a distance of about 11 metres. The marks disappeared for another 60 metres before appearing again until the final resting position. All along the aircraft was drifting to the left and, as a result, scraping the ground and uprooting sugar canes close to the edge of the runway.

Damage to the aircraft was substantial. The nose landing gear separated in the accident sequence. The left propeller blades were bent. Damage was also observed on the left wing, left aileron, all flaps, the rear fuselage underside and the nose landing gear doors. The bottom fuselage section forward of the cabin door was also extensively damaged.

It was not possible to assess the cause of the collapse of the left main landing gear. The aircraft was still lying on its belly and it was not immediately possible to jack it up for further examination.

The TPC runway surface is compacted volcanic soil. The airstrip was in very good condition at the time of the accident. Sugar cane plantations surround the airstrip.

The inspector interviewed an assistant supervisor of the sugar cane cutters who were working at the approach area of the active runway. He testified that first they heard an aircraft sound whose pitch kept changing. Finally the aircraft was seen approaching to land. Soon after touch down they heard a “bang-bang” sounding as if something was striking the ground. When the aircraft came to rest they saw one person coming out quickly.

The circumstances of this accident are being investigated.