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AIB Bulletin

AIB Bulletin No. 5

Ref.: CAV/ACC/5/05

Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type & Reg:

Seneca PA-34-200T

Reg. 5H-MFH

Serial

No. 34-7870141

No. & type of Engines: TCM TSI0-360-EB/LTSI0-360EB

Year of Manufacture: 1978

Date and Time (UTC): 07 April 2005 at 1403 hours

Location: Bulyankulu airstrip

Type of Flight: Charter Flight

Persons on Board:

Crew - 1

Passengers - 4

Injuries:

Crew - Nil

Passengers - Nil

Nature of Damage:

Damage confined to both propellers

Commander's License:

CPL

Commander's Age:

32 years

Commander's Experience:

Total 1255 **hours of which** 133 hours **were on**

type

Last 90 days 161 hrs

Last 28 days 110 hrs

Information Source:

Telephone call from Mwanza ATS

ALL TIMES UTC

History of the Flight

The aircraft was operating a company charter flight from Bulyankulu to Mwanza under visual flight rules. It was carrying one pilot and four passengers. The fuel endurance was three hours and thirty minutes.

The aircraft had earlier operated three sectors under the command of same pilot. These were Tulawaka/Mwanza, Mwanza/ Kahama and later in the afternoon, Kahama/Bulyankulu. The pilot reported that all the flights were conducted uneventfully. During the last sector the aircraft encountered rain. However, the flight landed safely at Bulyankulu at 1315 hours. The rain was still falling when the aircraft landed at Bulyankulu. The pilot therefore decided not to start his next flight to Mwanza until the rain had subsided and visibility had improved. When the rain subsided at about 1400 hrs, the pilot taxied the aircraft from the apron to the threshold of runway 27 at which point the take off for Mwanza was initiated.

When the aircraft had covered only 75 metres during the take-off roll, the aircraft suddenly drifted to the left.

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 circumstance of the accident 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 left main landing gear rolled into a shallow water drainage trench located just beside the edge of the runway. This caused both propellers to strike the ground. At this point the pilot had already decided to reject the take-off because he could not see beyond the windscreen due to some light rain which was still falling.

Damage to aircraft

The aircraft sustained damage to both propellers

Bulyankulu Aerodrome.

Bulyankulu Aerodrome, elevation 4,000 feet, has one runway 27/09 which is 1600 metres long and 23 metres wide.. The surface is paved and well maintained. Even with heavy rains the runway and the apron are be usable. The airstrip is owned by a mining company, Kahama Mining Corporation.

Findings

-The pilot was properly licensed and had adequate experience to operate commercially

the Piper Seneca PA 34 in accordance with the approved company Operating Procedures.

-The pilot confirmed that during the attempted take off there was some little rain.

-It is apparent that the pilot lost control just after full power was been applied. It is

possible that power levers were not applied symmetrically (less power on the left), causing an immediate drift to the left. The pilot himself said that the assumption is possible but he could not verify it. He however, admitted to have mishandled the aircraft.

-The pilot had been on duty since 0500 hrs, operating three sectors up to the time of the accident. His duty hours were within the duty hours approved by the Company Operations Manual. Depending on individual tolerance to duty fatigue and pressure to return to the base, it is possible that the pilot's individual tolerance to fatigue was stretched to the upper limit.