Safety Regulation Group
Safety Information and Data Department

Follow-up Action on Occurrence Report

ACCIDENT TO PITTS S-2A, G-PTTS, AT LEICESTER AIRPORT ON 14 MAY 2007

CAA FACTOR NUMBER	:	F34/2007
FACTOR PUBLICATION DATE	:	10 October 2007
OPERATOR	:	Private
CAA OCCURRENCE NUMBER	:	2007/04218
AAIB REPORT	:	Bulletin 9/2007

SYNOPSIS

From AAIB Report:
Shortly after taking off from Leicester airport, all thrust was lost from the propeller. A forced landing was made on to the disused section of the runway, where the aircraft sustained some damage. After coming to a halt, the engine continued to run, but at idle speed. It was established that a failure had occurred in the propeller control unit, leading to a loss of controlling oil pressure to the propeller hub. This resulted in the propeller blades moving to the coarse pitch angle stops. The pilot was unaware of this characteristic of the propeller, as this had not been covered in his training. Also, no reference to this was in the aircraft's Flight Manual. One Safety Recommendation is made.

FOLLOW UP ACTION

The one Safety Recommendation made by the AAIB following their investigation is reproduced below together with the CAA's response.

Recommendation 2007-054

It is recommended that the Civil Aviation Authority consider that information on the specific propeller behaviour following a propeller control unit failure, or other malfunctions, which result in a loss of control of the propeller blade angle on piston engine aerobatic aircraft, should be made readily available to all pilots of such aircraft on the UK register.

CAA Response

The CAA accepts this Recommendation and has considered if the information on the specific propeller behaviour following a propeller control unit failure, or other malfunctions, which result in a loss of control of the propeller blade angle on piston engine aerobatic aircraft, should be made readily available to all pilots of such aircraft on the UK register.

It is common practice in aerobatic aircraft for the constant speed unit to default to high pitch in the event of a loss of oil pressure to reduce rpm and prevent engine overspeed. This is the opposite effect of a failure in the oil supply on most single piston engine aircraft with constant speed propellers where the constant speed unit defaults to the low pitch position. The CAA intends to highlight the different default modes of constant speed propellers to the General Aviation community by an article in GASIL; this information will be included in the first GASIL in 2008.

CAA Status - Open