



Serious incident to the ROBIN DR400-100
registered **F-GGJG**
on Friday 28 March 2025
at Lognes-Émerainville aerodrome

Time	Around 13:30 ¹
Operator	Aéroclub Aigle de Saint-Maur
Type of flight	Cross country, in solo instruction
Persons on board	Student pilot
Consequences and damage	None

This is a courtesy translation by the BEA of the Final Report on the Safety Investigation. As accurate as the translation may be, the original text in French is the work of reference.

Runway veer-off on landing, balked landing, flight over taxiways and ramp at low height, in solo instruction

1 HISTORY OF THE FLIGHT

Note: the following information is principally based on statements, radiocommunication recordings and SDVFR data recorded by the student pilot's telephone.

After a session of runway circuits on Lognes-Émerainville aerodrome with the instructor, the student pilot carried out his first solo cross-country flight bound for Nangis-les-Loges aerodrome.

The cross-country flight to Nangis proceeded normally, the student pilot carried out two runway circuits at the aerodrome and then left to return to Lognes.

On approaching Lognes, he checked in at 1,200 ft² at point E³, the entry point for Lognes RMZ⁴ (see point ① above). The controller in the TWR position at Lognes tower asked him to call back overhead the aerodrome at 1,500 ft due to traffic on the downwind leg.

Forty-one seconds later, the controller suggested to the student pilot of F-GGJG that he join the long final for runway 26 behind the traffic which was passing onto the base leg. The student accepted this option (point ②).

He configured the aeroplane for landing with flaps 2. He actioned the carburettor heat control.

¹ Except where otherwise indicated, the times in this report are in Coordinated Universal Time (UTC). One hour should be added to obtain the legal time applicable in Metropolitan France on the day of the event.

² The glossary of abbreviations and acronyms frequently used by the BEA can be found on its [web site](#).

³ Point E is around 3 Nm from the threshold of runway 26.

⁴ Radio Mandatory Zone.

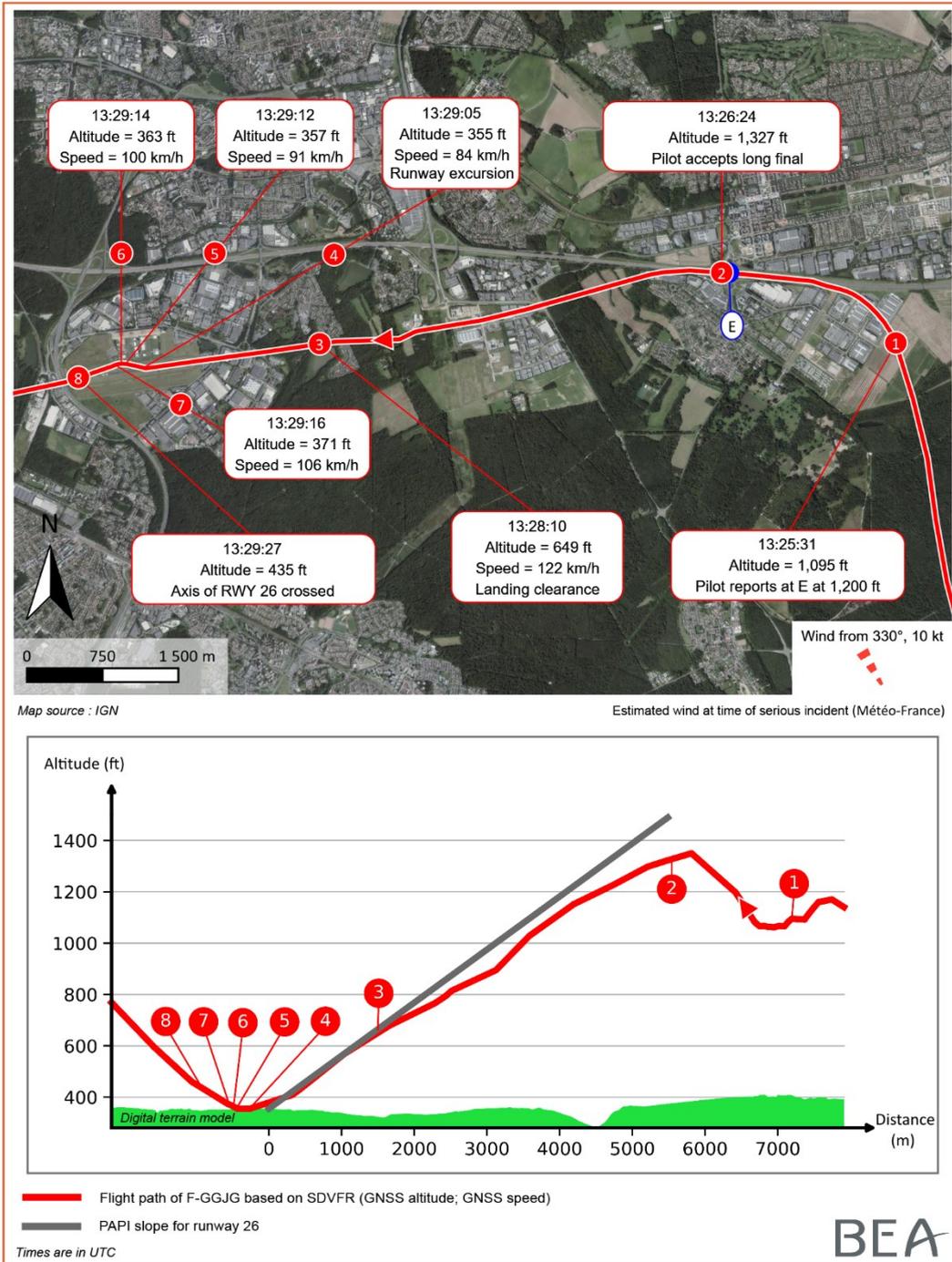


Figure 1: approach path of F-GGJG, overall view

The student pilot was given clearance to land (point 3). The controller reported that the wind was from 310° and of 5 to 13 kt. The nose of the aeroplane was oriented into the wind, to the right-hand side of the runway axis. When flaring, the student pilot decrabed to the left to reorient the nose of the aeroplane onto the runway centreline. Simultaneously on touchdown, he felt the nose of the aeroplane return to the direction of the wind, toward the right.

Sensing that the aeroplane was heading towards the grass, the student pilot carried out a balked landing⁵ in order to avoid a runway excursion.

⁵ It has not been possible to establish with certainty when this decision was made.

The aeroplane continued on its right-hand path and left the runway at an angle of around 20° with respect to the runway centreline (see point 4 above). The aeroplane ran over the grass area between the runway and taxiway N⁶. It then crossed the intersection between taxiways N and N3 before flying over refuelling stations L2 and L4 and part of the apron facing the tower, with a low rate of climb and a height below 20 ft.

While flying over the ramp, the student pilot started a left-hand turn in order to join the runway axis. He flew over taxiway N and then N4 again at a height of around 45 ft. He joined the runway axis at around 220 m from threshold 08 (point 8).

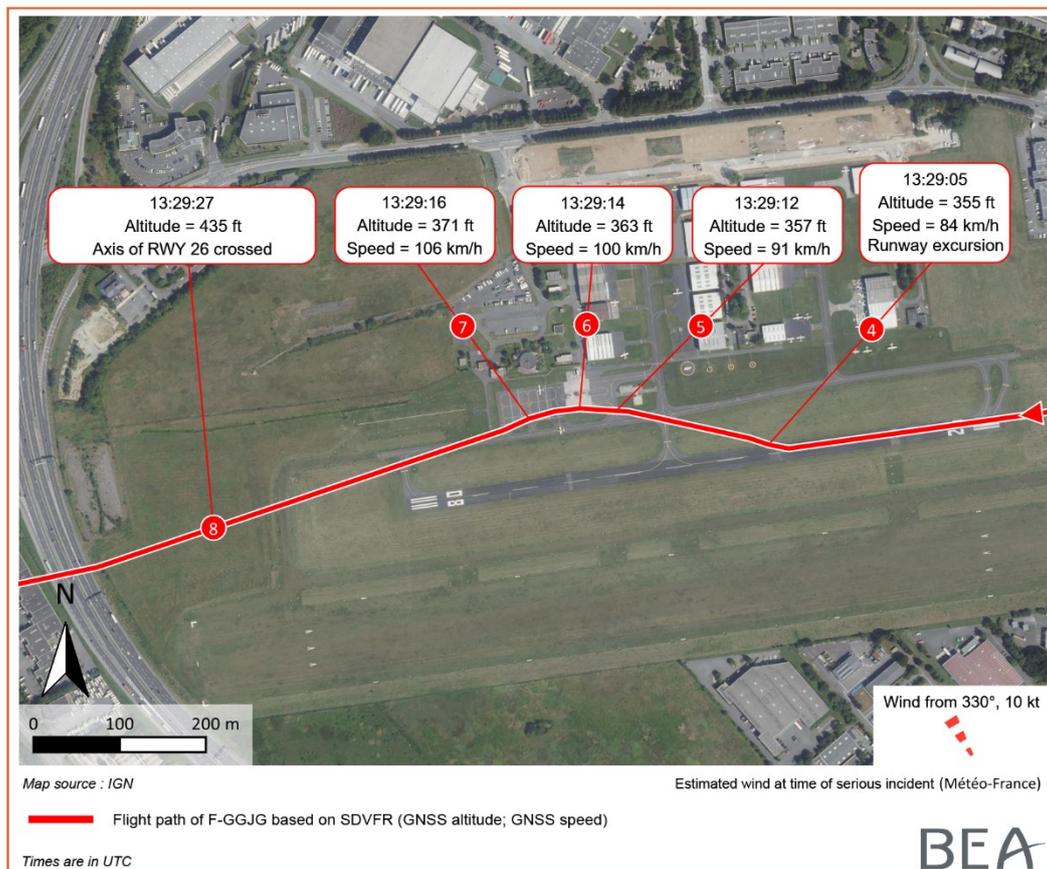


Figure 2: path after touchdown⁷

The student pilot joined the downwind leg again to land on runway 26 which proceeded without incident.

⁶ See paragraph 2.6

⁷ The image does not show the aerodrome at the time of the accident. In particular, the aeroplanes visible on this figure on the taxiways or aprons were not present at the time of the incident.

2 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

2.1 Student pilot's experience and statement

Note: the student pilot was interviewed three weeks after the incident. His recollection of the occurrence, as recounted in his statement has most likely been influenced by normal memory processes and the various discussions about the incident he may have had with the instructor or other people.

The 32-year-old student pilot was following training with the flying club to obtain the PPL(A). He had started this training in June 2023. He had logged 57 flight hours including 6 hours 30 minutes in the previous 30 days and 5 hours 30 minutes in solo instruction.

His training had been carried out on various DR400s belonging to the flying club (principally versions -100, 2+2 and -120).

He explained that the cross-country flight to and from Nangis had proceeded without difficulty. He carried out two touch-and-goes at Nangis on runway 23⁸.

On approaching Lognes, he carried out a briefing for joining the long final for runway 26. After checking in at point E at 1,200 ft and being cleared to fly overhead Lognes airfield at 1,500 ft in order to join the runway circuit, he started the actions to put the aeroplane into climb.

He explained that the fact that the controller had cleared him to join the long final for runway 26 after having initially asked him to fly overhead the airfield at 1,500 ft in order to join the runway circuit may have unsettled him but in a limited way.

Following this change to the plan of action, he carried out a manoeuvre to intercept the approach slope and considered that, when he was cleared for landing, he was stabilized on the slope and axis with a speed of 130 km/h. He therefore decided to continue the approach.

He did not understand why, when flaring and as he was decrabing and the aeroplane was touching down, the aeroplane realigned itself with the wind, in a right-hand direction. He offered several hypotheses, including a possible gust of wind, insufficient pressure on the left rudder pedal or unintentional pressure on one or both brake pedals.

He explained that, noticing the aeroplane was heading towards the grass, he increased the throttle to avoid a runway excursion. He stated that he was aware the airspeed was low at that moment and that he needed to limit the bank angle. He sensed that the aeroplane was not taking off again. He then realized that he had not pushed the carburettor heat control nor reconfigured the aeroplane with flaps 1 for take-off. While he was reconfiguring the aeroplane for take-off, it continued its path oriented to the right of the runway axis. He explained that he had seen that there was no-one on the taxiways and that he preferred concentrating on reconfiguring the aeroplane and exiting the backside of the power curve rather than making an immediate turn.

⁸ Runway 23 at Nangis aerodrome is a paved runway measuring 955 m x 20 m. This aerodrome does not have a weather station. The 13:00 METAR issued by Melun-Villaroche aerodrome weather station situated approximately 13 Nm west of Nangis aerodrome indicated wind from 330° of 7 kt.

He then focused on joining the take-off axis of runway 26 to join the runway circuit and carry out a full-stop landing.

He explained that he could feel his heart beating fast at the beginning of the downwind leg but that he managed to lower his stress by concentrating. He thought the fact that the controller did not ask him for an explanation for the manoeuvre during the downwind leg helped him to do this.

He indicated that he redoubled his vigilance for the second landing, paying particular attention to the decrabing and the management of the pedals.

2.2 Instructor experience and statements

The 29-year-old instructor held a CPL(A) issued in 2021 along with the IR-ME rating. He held an instructor rating obtained in April 2023 and had carried out nearly 340 instruction hours since. He had logged 572 flight hours.

He had carried out a large part of the student pilot's training. He explained that the training had proceeded in a standard manner and that he had never noted any dangerous behaviour on the part of the student pilot. He had himself authorized the student pilot for supervised solo flights after approval from a supervisor instructor.

The occurrence flight was the student pilot's first solo cross-country flight. As was his habit before a solo flight, he flew with the student to check the latter's mindset and that the weather conditions were suitable for the solo flight. He explained that this reassured both the student pilot and the instructor.

He was in a briefing with another student pilot when the event occurred and therefore did not see the sequence.

After being informed of the occurrence by the tower controller, he joined the student pilot on his arrival to debrief with him and to carry out the formalities related to the incident.

They then carried out a runway circuit to put this experience behind him and to help him regain confidence. During the take-off, he noticed tire marks on the runway where F-GGJG had veered off, which he identified as marks left by the main landing gear probably due to braking too hard.

He explained that he asked the club mechanics to check the tires after this flight and that this examination did not find any specific marks to confirm this hypothesis.

He indicated that at club-level, it had been determined that the various brake control configurations on the school aeroplanes were a threat. He taught his students to always call out "heels on floor" before taking off or on short final.

2.3 Statements from controllers in position in tower

Three controllers were in position in the control tower cab. They saw part of the aeroplane's manoeuvres.

One of the controllers explained that he saw the aeroplane bank to the left-hand side quite rapidly but smoothly while flying over the ramp. He estimated that the bank was less than 30° and that the taking of the bank was controlled. He had not had the feeling that this roll corresponded to an evasive action.

Another controller confirmed that the left bank was not steep. He explained, however, that he had had the impression that the pilot banked the aeroplane to avoid the fuel pumps.

The controller who was in the TWR position, on the frequency with the student pilot, deliberately chose not to ask the student pilot for an explanation after this manoeuvre and during the subsequent runway circuit.

2.4 Aircraft information

F-GGJG is a DR400-100 equipped with brake controls on the pedals⁹ and a “hand brake” type flap control.

The recommended configuration for landing in light to moderate wind conditions is full flaps (flaps 2). Take-off must be carried out with flaps 1.

Certain characteristic speeds of the aeroplane are indicated below:

- rotation speed (flaps 1): 100 km/h;
- initial climb speed (flaps 1): 130 km/h;
- normal climb speed: 150 km/h;
- stall speeds: 78 km/h (flaps 2), 88 km/h (clean configuration).

For a stall speed of 78 km/h with flaps 2 and maximum weight, the 1.3 x Vs value is 102 km/h.

The F-GGJG flight manual specifies an approach speed of 110 km/h with flaps 2, even 120 km/h with flaps 1 in crosswind conditions or if there are strong gusts.

The normal operating procedures sheet produced by the flying club, for both the 100-hp and 120-hp DR400s, mentions a speed of 120 km/h with flaps 2.

2.5 Meteorological information

At the time of the student’s departure for the cross-country flight to Nangis, the ATIS in force included the following wind information: wind from 280° of 7 kt, varying in direction between 210° and 350°.

The ATIS in force at the time of the return cross-country flight included the following wind information: wind from 330° of 7 to 12 kt, varying in direction between 250° and 360°.

When the controller cleared the student to land, she provided him with the following wind information: wind from 310° of 5 to 13 kt.

⁹ The other DR400s used for training in the flying club are equipped with brake control systems which can be different.

The VAC chart indicates in the Air Navigation Hazards section, Particular Meteorological Conditions that, “If wind from N, possible gust of wind on paved RWY, due to presence of hangars.” The aerodrome users consulted indicated, however, that the wind conditions at the time of the incident probably did not cause such gusts.

2.6 Aerodrome information

Lognes-Émerainville (LFPL) aerodrome is an aerodrome open to public air traffic. It has two parallel runways, one paved (08-26)¹⁰ and the other unpaved (08R-26L).

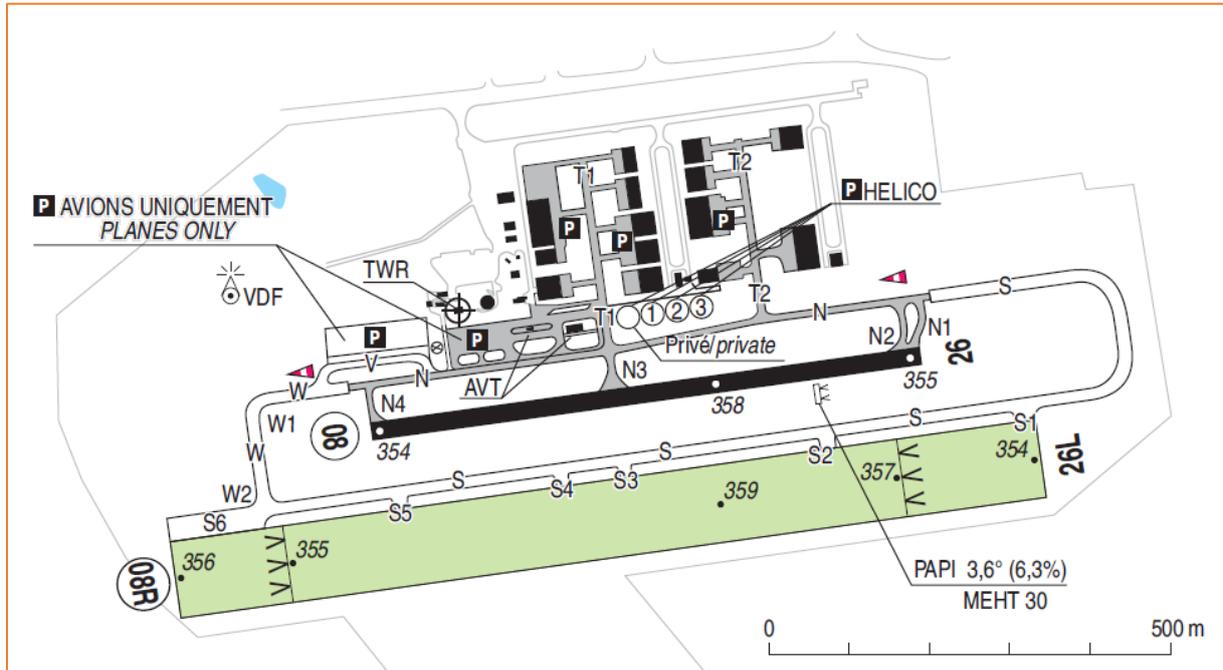


Figure 3: excerpt from LFPL VAC (source: SIA)

Taxiway N is used by all aircraft to access the runway.

The refuelling area (Figure 4) is situated north of taxiway N and west of taxiways N3 and T1. In the immediate vicinity of N3/T1 and N there is the helicopter refuelling station (K1). The aeroplane refuelling area is situated to the west of this area with two taxiways leading to it, one to the north of pumps 100LL and the other to the south of these pumps (positions L2 and L4) close to taxiway N.

To the west of the refuelling area, there is the aeroplane apron facing the tower.

At the time of the incident, no aircraft was present on taxiway N, in the refuelling area or on the apron facing the control tower.

¹⁰ Runway 26 used during the incident measures 700 m x 20 m.

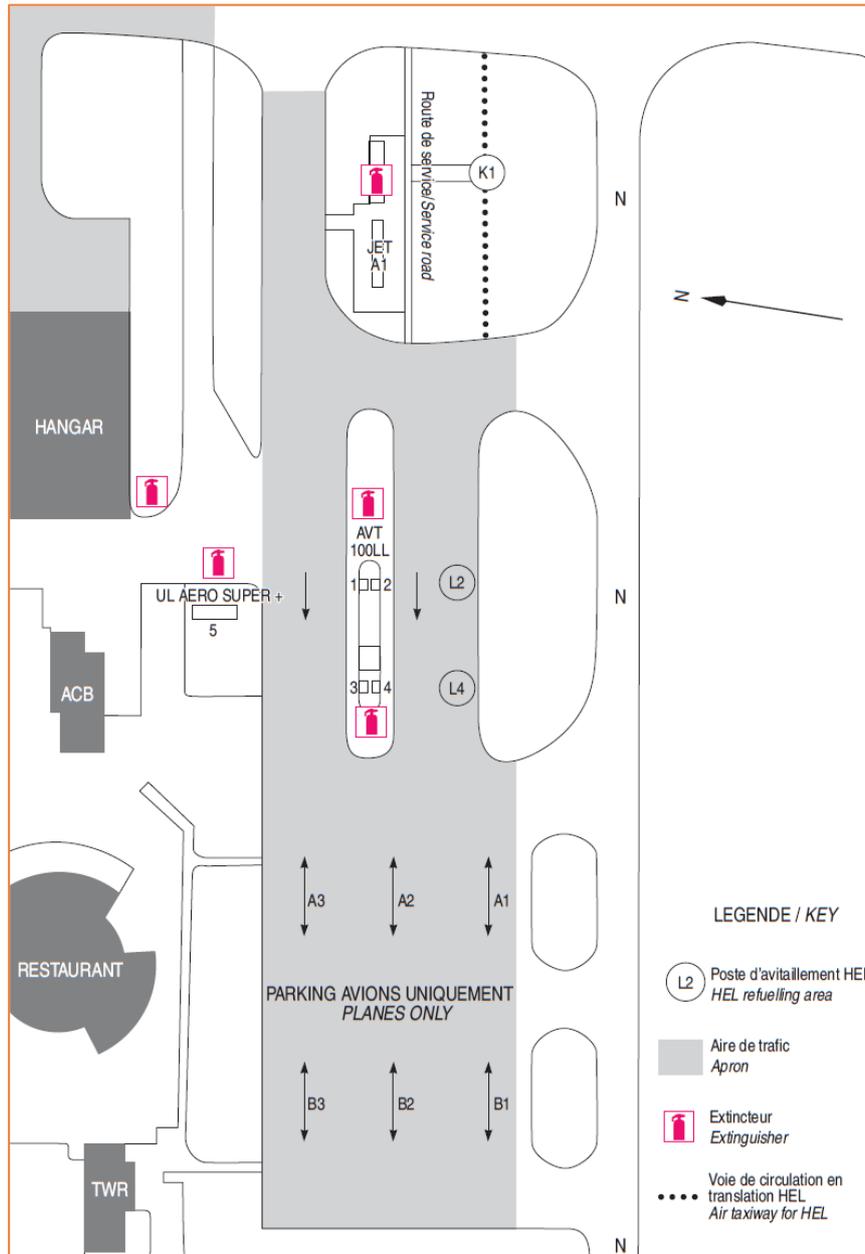


Figure 4: refuelling area and apron (source: SIA)

2.7 Path

The path of F-GGJG during the incident was reconstructed based on data recorded by the SDVFR application used by the student pilot and on a photo taken from the control tower. In this photo, the marks left by the main landing gear of F-GGJG as it travelled over the grass area situated between runway 26 and taxiway N, to the east of N3, are visible.

It cannot be determined from these elements at precisely what point the aeroplane left the ground during the balked landing. The statements from the two controllers in position in the control tower cab seem to indicate that the aeroplane left the ground near helicopter refuelling station K.

2.8 Similar occurrences

The subject of rejected or bailed landings has been covered in a certain number of the BEA's investigation reports. Among the most recent are the following three occurrences:

- [Accident to the Piper PA28 registered F-HDYN on 8 July 2023 at Lognes – Émerainville;](#)
- [Serious incident to the Mooney M20J registered F-HGPR on 6 August 2024 at La Rochelle - île de Ré;](#)
- [Accident to the CIRRUS SR22 registered PH-SJN on 28 July 2020 at Nancy-Essey.](#)

Rejected or bailed landings are also the subject of the [Safety Lessons](#) identified by the BEA for light aeroplanes in 2024. This topic was also covered in 2020.

When confronted with an unexpected situation during the landing (long flare, bounce, lateral swerve), the pilot may have to make choices in a very dynamic situation: continue the landing with the risk of damaging the plane or take-off again. This choice must be made very rapidly. As illustrated by the various BEA reports, this choice is made on criteria which are uncertain or difficult to estimate (remaining runway distance, size of bounce, existence of possible damage to the aircraft for example). The study of previous events shows that the accidents with the most serious consequences during the landing occur, above all, when power is increased with insufficient control of the aircraft. On the other hand, the accidents which occurred when the landing was continued, while they often lead to material damage, rarely result, on a light aeroplane, in serious or fatal injuries.

In the case of the incident to F-GGJG, the student pilot probably maintained sufficient control of the aircraft, with reduced safety margins with respect to the stall risk. In this context, the presence of an aircraft parked or taxiing on the ramp flown over at low height by the pilot of F-GGJG could have presented an additional difficulty that could have led to a different outcome. Likewise, in these circumstances, the perception of obstacles (ground traffic signs, windsock) may be impaired and the avoidance of these obstacles compromised as illustrated in the [accident to the ROBIN DR400-120 registered F-GSBN on 14 June 2024 at Chartres-Champhol.](#)

3 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions are solely based on the information which came to the knowledge of the BEA during the investigation.

Scenario

On returning from a cross-country flight in solo instruction, at the time of landing, in moderate variable crosswind conditions, the student pilot lost lateral control of the flight path.

Sensing that the aeroplane was leaving the runway, he carried out a bailed landing. He then prioritized managing the reconfiguration of the aeroplane for take-off at the expense of the path, aware that the aeroplane was in a slow flight phase and close to stalling and that there was no aircraft on the taxiways ahead of him. He then smoothly managed the path with the aim of returning to the take-off path.

In doing this, he flew at a low height over the taxiways, refuelling stations and apron which were, at this time, free of traffic.

Safety lessons

Deciding to carry out a rejected or bailed landing

The study of previous events shows that the accidents with the most serious consequences during the landing occur, above all, when power is increased with insufficient control of the aircraft. On the other hand, the accidents which occurred when the landing was continued, while they often lead to material damage, rarely result, on a light aeroplane, in serious or fatal injuries.

The decision to carry out a rejected or bailed landing or to continue the landing is made under significant time constraints, leaving the pilot little time to fully assess the situation and potential threats.

Focusing on an obvious immediate threat, such as a runway excursion, can overshadow other, less immediate or less obvious threats that might arise from the decision to reject the landing. Examples include insufficient aircraft control during a critical phase of flight, or the presence of an obstacle on a non-nominal path.

Using case studies from past events (lessons learned, investigation reports) during the theoretical training can help instructors to envisage with students or pilots, their reactions in the event of an unforeseen occurrence. This can also be an opportunity to discuss simple decision-making criteria.

The BEA investigations are conducted with the sole objective of improving aviation safety and are not intended to apportion blame or liabilities.