



Air Accident Investigation Unit Ireland

**PRELIMINARY REPORT
ACCIDENT
Reims-Cessna F150H, EI-AST
Birr, Co. Offaly,
Date 11/11/2012**



**An Roinn Iompair
Turasóireachta agus Spóirt**

Department of Transport,
Tourism and Sport

PRELIMINARY REPORT

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This Investigation is conducted in accordance with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, Regulation (EU) No. 996/2010 and the provisions of S.I. 460 of 2009. This Preliminary Report contains information, as known at this time, and does not contain analysis or conclusions. This information is therefore subject to change and may contain errors; any errors in this Report will be corrected in the Final Report. The sole purpose of this Investigation is the prevention of aviation accidents and incidents. It is not the purpose of this Investigation to apportion blame or liability.

AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURER:	Reims-Cessna
Model:	F150H
State of Registry:	Ireland
Serial Number:	F150-0273
Year of Manufacture:	1968
TYPE OF OPERATION:	General Aviation, Flight Instruction
DATE / TIME:	11 November 2012 @ 16:44 hrs UTC ¹
LOCATION:	Near Birr Airfield (EIBR), Co. Offaly, Ireland
Position:	N53° 03.840', W007°53.688'
PERSONS ON BOARD:	Crew: 2 Passengers: 0
INJURIES:	Crew: 2 (Fatal)
DAMAGE:	Aircraft destroyed
INVESTIGATOR-IN-CHARGE:	Paddy Judge

¹ **UTC:** Co-ordinated Universal Time (the same as local time on the day of the accident).



1. History of Flight

The aircraft conducted six flights at Birr Airfield on the day of the accident. On each occasion there were two pilots on board, the Instructor and another. The first series of three flights, each of one hour duration, was recorded as having commenced at 10.15 hrs and concluded at 14.00 hrs. Birr Airfield records showed that the aircraft was being refuelled at 14.05 hrs with 43.08 litres of AVGAS 100LL. It was reported by two witnesses that this brought the fuel quantity to the standard club fuel load of 60 litres.

Following this, three training details ensued with the same Instructor but with different students. The third detail, the accident flight, entailed circuit training with the Student pilot. Following a touch-and-go landing on Runway (RWY) 18 the aircraft was observed by witnesses to climb away. At 16.44 hrs during the climb out witnesses heard the engine stop and observed the aircraft make a steep descending turn to the left before disappearing from view.

2. Post-Accident Response

The Emergency Services were contacted and due to approaching darkness and the black colour of the aircraft the accident site proved difficult to find. A Garda helicopter subsequently located the accident site at 18.04 hrs using a thermal imaging camera and directed ground search teams.

The AAIU received initial notification of the accident at 18.25 hrs and was informed shortly afterwards that the accident site had been located. Both occupants had been fatally injured. An AAIU response team departed Dublin at 19.10 hrs and routed directly to Birr Garda station for a briefing with the on-scene commander. The AAIU team arrived at the accident site at approximately 22.00 hrs, coordinated with the Fire Service, and commenced an initial examination of the wreckage. The site was then secured overnight by An Garda Síochána.

The following morning the AAIU carried out a further examination of the scene. The wreckage was then recovered and transported under escort to the AAIU facility at Gormanston, Co. Meath.

3. Accident Site

Examination of the accident site, which was located approximately 350 metres southeast of the end of RWY 18, showed that the aircraft initially impacted heavily in a northerly direction with a nose down attitude, more or less wings level. The nose landing gear detached and the aircraft came to rest inverted a short distance from the point of initial impact. The cabin had been crushed and the fuselage was fractured behind the cabin, remaining attached only by cables. Several fractures were found in the engine bearer arm structure and one blade of the propeller, which showed no evidence of rotation at impact, was bent backwards from mid span.

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The Investigation found no evidence of any substantial fuel deposit at the accident site although a small amount leaked from the inverted wreckage when raised during the recovery operation.

4. On-going Investigation

The on-going Investigation will include further examination of the aircraft and engine as well as operational aspects and conduct of the flight. However, at this time, no technical defect that might have contributed to the accident has been found.

A Final Report will be published in due course.

- END -

In accordance with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, Regulation (EU) No 996/2010, and Statutory Instrument No. 460 of 2009, Air Navigation (Notification and Investigation of Accidents, Serious Incidents and Incidents) Regulation, 2009, the sole purpose of this investigation is to prevent aviation accidents and serious incidents. It is not the purpose of any such investigation and the associated investigation report to apportion blame or liability.

A safety recommendation shall in no case create a presumption of blame or liability for an occurrence.

Produced by the Air Accident Investigation Unit

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