

No: 12/89

Ref: EW/C1135

Category: 1c

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Aviamilano Falco F8L series 2, G-ROVI	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-320-A1A piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1958	
Date and Time (UTC):	9 September 1989 at 1114 hrs	
Location:	Strangford Lough, Co Down, Northern Ireland	
Type of Flight:	Private (pleasure)	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - 1(fatal)	Passengers - 1(fatal)
Nature of Damage:	Aircraft destroyed	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	43 years	
Commander's Total Flying Experience:	At least 1,070 hours (of which about 360 were on type)	
Information Source:	AAIB Field Investigation	

The aircraft departed from Newtownards Aerodrome at about 1110 hrs and flew south over Strangford Lough. It was in level flight on a southerly track, to the east of an island named Long Sheelagh, when a loud bang was heard. The aircraft was then observed to descend almost vertically, with the empennage a short distance behind the main fuselage, but still attached by the control cables. Two smaller pieces were observed, slightly to one side and behind, falling at the same rate as the main body of the aircraft. During the latter stage of the descent and on impact with the water, the airframe disintegrated into many small pieces. An observer in a boat near the point of impact noted that the time was 1114 hrs. The body of the pilot was recovered soon afterwards, along with the complete empennage and several small pieces of wreckage, mainly from the wing and rear fuselage area. Despite an extensive search, the body of the passenger and the forward part of the aircraft, including the wing main spar, landing gear, engine and propeller were not recovered.

The post mortem conducted on the pilot revealed that he died of multiple injuries and did not have any pre-existing medical condition which would have contributed to the accident. Insufficient wreckage was recovered to conduct a full investigation into this accident. From the portions of the wreckage which were recovered it was ascertained that the tail had been subjected to loads in excess of the design ultimate loads, causing it to break away from the rear of the aircraft. These loads had been imposed on the tail by impact with another object, almost certainly some other part of the aircraft, which had

detached immediately beforehand. It was established that the sliding canopy had released and run backwards, breaking free from its guide rails, during the accident sequence. Witness marks indicated that the canopy had contacted the fin leading edge and root fairing. In the opinion of the Sequoia Aircraft Corporation, the kit manufacturer in the USA, the canopy could have struck the fin causing structural failure, and release of the canopy would be a probable consequence of any failure of the windscreen at speed.

The Certificate of Airworthiness stated that the airframe was cleared to +6g and -3g. The wing spar root area had been inspected and some minor repairs carried out in December 1988.