AAIB Bulletin No: 9/94 **Ref: EW/G94/06/11** **Category: 1.3**

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Nord 3400, G-BOSJ	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Potez 4D34C piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1960	
Date & Time (UTC):	12 June 1994 at 1356 hrs	
Location:	Fenland Airfield, Lincolnshire	
Type of Flight:	Private (Pleasure)	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Aircraft destroyed	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	46 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	2,105 hours (of which 2 were on type) Last 90 days - 24 hours Last 28 days - 8 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and further enquiries by the AAIB	

The aircraft had been recently restored and was being flown by a journalist with the aircraft's owner in the rear seat as a passenger. The purpose of the flight was to gather information for an article that was to be published in a national aviation magazine and the initial part of the flight involved air-to-air photography over the Wash in Lincolnshire. While flying over the sea, the Nord and the photographic aircraft descended to low level. During this period, the pilot of the Nord, who was concentrating on maintaining formation on the photographic aircraft, allowed the wheels of his aircraft to come into contact with the surface of the sea. The photographic aircraft departed for Fenland and the Nord was climbed to about 2,000 feet where the pilot carried out some handling exercises as part of his assessment of the flying qualities of the aircraft. No handling difficulties were reported and the aircraft was flown to Fenland for some circuit flying.

The weather at Fenland was fine and the surface wind was reported as calm. The grass Runway 36 was in use and a video recording taken at the time confirmed that the surface wind was very light with a slight component from the west. The first approach was made using a mid flap setting and the subsequent landing was uneventful apart from an initial bounce and a swing to the left on application

of power which the pilot reported was easily countered using rudder. The second approach, during which the pilot noted that the windsock indicated a slight crosswind from the left, was made with full flap and resulted in a normal three point touchdown in the centre of the runway and some 150 metres into the 624 metre length. The pilot reported that he felt that the aircraft had decelerated at a higher rate than on the previous landing before a swing to the left developed. The owner considered that the aircraft had slowed to about 20 to 30 mph before the swing developed and before the pilot applied power. In response to the swing the pilot instantly applied full corrective rudder, increased power and reduced the flap setting with the intention of completing a go-around into his pre-planned final circuit and landing. Despite the pilot's actions, the aircraft continued to swing to the left onto the adjacent taxiway and headed for a large drainage ditch which runs parallel to the runway. The pilot considered that there was insufficient distance remaining in which to stop the aircraft before entering the ditch and therefore elected to continue the takeoff. He reported that he was able to prevent the aircraft from entering the ditch while flying just above the stall. Having cleared the ditch, the pilot reported that he was flying over a stubble field with the airspeed increasing when the owner called to him to reduce the flap setting before making a remark that led the pilot to believe that there was sufficient distance remaining for the aircraft to become safely airborne. The video recording of the event shows that following the initial swing to the left, the aircraft became airborne in a high nose attitude before sinking back to the ground for a very firm landing prior to flying along the ditch, again in a nose-high attitude. During the brief period of flight before the firm landing, the flaps can be seen retracting rapidly to their fully 'UP' position. Having cleared the ditch, the aircraft continued in level flight for five seconds before impacting a hedge and turning over onto its back. An audio analysis of the video soundtrack indicated that the engine was at full power until the aircraft impacted the hedge. There was no fire and both occupants escaped with minor injuries.

The pilot considered that the cause of the accident was in part due to the 'unexpectedly vicious swing characteristics' of the aircraft on the go-around. However, a report by the CAA light aircraft test pilot, who flew the aircraft to establish its suitability for the issue of a Permit to Fly, stated that 'the directional control was good in the light wind'. It could not be established whether or not the aircraft's contact with the sea had distorted the landing gear in such a way as to affect the ground handling of the aircraft.