

# OCCURRENCES



## Fit to fly?

*Taking off if you don't feel great isn't a smart move*

### THE INVESTIGATION

An MOR regarding this incident was raised by the FISO at the airfield where the aircraft concerned had planned to land. Whilst the pilot-in-command was requesting joining instructions the FISO observed an aircraft flying overhead the airfield which the FISO was able to identify as the aircraft they were in communication with. The relevant joining information was provided to the aircraft with the FISO asking the pilot-in-command to report their position. The pilot read back an incorrect QFE setting and stated they were approximately 5nm outside the ATZ.

While the FISO was trying to ascertain the pilot's intentions the aircraft was then observed making a steep diving turn crossing the final approach path of the runway. After what appeared to be further erratic manoeuvres and confusing RT from the pilot, the aircraft eventually performed a safe landing. At the time it was worth noting that traffic information was passed to other aircraft already established in the circuit.

The pilot-in-command was contacted by the General Aviation Unit and assisted with the investigation by providing a post-flight report. The pilot explained they had eaten lunch at another airfield before commencing the return flight back. Unfortunately, just prior to conducting the return flight the pilot explained they began to feel unwell, and this feeling of nausea deteriorated during the flight. Consequently, the pilot-in-command became temporarily incapacitated resulting in degraded performance by missing and relaying confusing RT and generally struggling with the joining procedure. The pilot confirmed that two other aircraft in the circuit were required to be re-positioned by the FISO to assist with the safe landing.

*As with all General Aviation flights, the pilot-in-command has overall responsibility for the safe conduct of the flight and all those on-board.*

*This will involve thorough pre-flight preparation and planning including how the pilot will depart the airfield, the en-route phase to the correct procedures to be flown at the destination airfield. In addition, it is essential pilots apply effective threat and error management by identifying the threats that may affect the flight, the errors that they could make and how they plan to mitigate them in a safe and effective manner.*

*In this incident, the pilot was caught by a sudden onset of illness whereby they started experiencing feelings of being unwell just prior to departure. At this time the pilot should have elected to postpone their departure until such a time that they felt they could safely operate the aircraft. If still unwell, then the sensible and safe course of action would be to abandon the flight.*

*Unfortunately, the pilot elected to continue with the planned departure, but their health deteriorated further during the flight to an extent they were not fully cognisant with the various RT calls and additionally experienced a loss of situational awareness.*

*The Subject Matter Expert who investigated this incident determined that regulatory action with the pilot was deemed inappropriate for this occurrence. However, as part of the MOR closure process and under a Just Culture, the pilot was written to outlining the findings and offered guidance that in the event of a future similar incident whereby the pilot feels unwell prior to departure, the safest course of action is to postpone departure.*

*If, on the other hand, the pilot has a sudden onset of illness during the flight then it will be prudent to call the destination airfield, advising of the situation whereby assistance may be provided to aid the join and landing etc as requested by the pilot.*

## UK MANDATORY OCCURRENCE REPORTING

Mandatory occurrence reporting is aimed at continued learning from aviation occurrences. It's aimed at improving safety by ensuring that relevant safety information relating to civil aviation is reported, collected, stored, protected, exchanged, disseminated, and analysed. It is not to attribute blame or liability. Occurrence Reports are treated confidentially to maintain full and free reporting from the aviation community.

**What should I report?** In a nutshell any occurrence you feel could impact on aviation safety, this will ensure that we always review and learn from events.

**How can I report?** Reporters should submit MORs to the UK CAA in the following ways: Aviation Reporting Portal at: <https://aviationreporting.eu/> Further details about how reports can be submitted using the reporting portal can be found in [CAP1496](#).