

# ST50 belly-lands after engine fails

THE PROTOTYPE of the ST50 single-turboprop business aircraft was slightly damaged during an emergency landing in Israel on 19 May after an engine failure forced the pilot to land in a field near the airstrip.

The all-composite ST 50 has been developed by the Minnesota, US-based Cirrus Design for Isra-aviation. The company, located in Kiryat-Shmona in northern Israel, re-assembled the aircraft earlier this year after completion of US test flying, and commenced its series of flights earlier this month.

The Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6A-137 engine has been returned to Canada to be stripped down and tested in an effort to

find the fault. A new engine is being supplied to allow continuation of testing.

The incident occurred when the engine flamed out at an altitude of about 900ft (275m) during the third test flight of the day. The test pilots, Dani Shapira and Nahum Yoel, attempted to restart the engine, but failed.

The pilots brought the aircraft down in a field with the landing gear retracted. The ST50 skidded for 260m before coming to a stop. The two pilots were not hurt in the incident.

Stephane Juffa, president of Israaviation, says that, apart from the propeller, "...the damage to the fuselage is minor".



Hiller has flown its first UH-12E3 after the machine's May roll-out

## Hiller Aircraft flies again

HILLER AIRCRAFT has flown its first new-build UH-12E3 light utility helicopter after the production machine was rolled out earlier this month from its assembly site in Newark, California.

The helicopter is the first of a batch of 20 machines to be built for a Thai investor group which helped Jeffrey Hiller, son of the company's original founder, Stanley Hiller, acquire the company in 1994. Part of the batch will be made up of five-

seat UH-12E5s, the first production version of which will be completed by mid-June.

The E3 and E5 are powered by the 250kW (340shp)-rated Textron Lycoming VO-540 piston engine, but the 310kW (de-rated) Allison 250-C20B turboshaft has been offered as an option. Production of spare parts for more than 1,000 Hiller helicopters still in service began at the new California site in September 1994.



## FAA approves TFE731-60 for Falcon 900EX

THE US FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION has certificated the AlliedSignal TFE731-60 turbofan ahead of the first flight of the Dassault Falcon 900EX business aircraft, the first application for the engine. Four TFE 731-60 development engines have been delivered for flight tests. Almost 3,500h of tests have been amassed by the engines, including more than 350h of flight testing.

## London's firefighters test Eurocopter's BK.117

THE LONDON Fire Brigade (LFB) in the UK is to run a six-week trial of a helicopter on emergency operations.

It will hire a Eurocopter BK.117C-1 from McAlpine Helicopters as part of a continuing evaluation of the possible role of helicopters (*Flight International*, 4-10 January).

During the £80,000 day-time-only trial, funded through the London Fire and Civil Defence Authority, the machine will be based at McAlpine's site at Hayes.

Possible application include transporting specialist crews and equipment to incident scenes. There is no intention of using it to replace pumping appliances.

## Sikorsky swims ashore

A SIKORSKY S-61N helicopter has probably beaten the water-taxing record for a non-float-equipped aircraft by travelling some 30km (16nm) to land on an isolated part of the Namibian coast in southern Africa.

The Court Helicopters aircraft, operating between an offshore drilling and the remote Arandis base 50km inland of Swakopmund in northern Namibia, was put down in the sea after suffering a single-engine failure.

The pilots force-landed in a

calm sea, and used power from the remaining engine to water-taxi to the Skeleton Coast, where the helicopter was beached. All four passengers and two crew survived unharmed. The aircraft was carrying freight as well as passengers.

Court Helicopters, one of southern Africa's largest helicopter operators, says that an investigation is under way examining why the pilot was unable to keep the aircraft airborne on the operating engine — which is possible in theory.