



GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SUMMARY REPORT

Reference No.

SI/762/1002

Publication of this report is authorised by the Secretary under the provisions of Air Navigation Regulations 283 (1)

LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

Three kilometres south-east of Finley, New South Wales	Height a.m.s.l. 380 feet	Date 7.1.76	Time (Local) 2050 hours	Zone ESuT
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2. THE AIRCRAFT

Make and Model Cessna A188/A1	Registration VH-KQJ	Certificate of Airworthiness Valid from 18.11.69 to 17.11.78
Certificate of Registration issued to Skyfarmers (Morwell) Pty. Ltd., P.O. Box 453, Morwell, Victoria.	Operator Skyfarmers (Morwell) Pty. Ltd., P.O. Box 453, Morwell, Victoria.	Degree of damage to aircraft Destroyed
		Other property damaged Power cables
Defects discovered Nil		

3. THE FLIGHT

Last or intended departure point by	Time of departure 2040 hours	Next point of intended landing Finley	Purpose of flight Agricultural Spraying	Class of operation Aerial Work
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4. THE CREW

Name	Status	Age	Class of licence	Hours on type	Total hours	Degree of injury
Bent Kirkevang NIELSON	Pilot	38	Commercial	975	1855	Fatal

5. OTHER PERSONS (All passengers and persons injured on ground)

Name	Status	Degree of injury	Name	Status	Degree of injury

6. RELEVANT EVENTS

The pilot commenced aerial spraying operations at about 0620 hours and, by 0920, he had completed four flights. He made no further flights during the day until about 2000 hours when he commenced the first of two flights required to spray a tomato crop. He had previously sprayed this crop on some four occasions during the previous two months. The weather was fine and warm, the wind was calm, there was no cloud and the end of daylight was at 2109 hours.

The tomato crop was situated in a rectangular field and the aircraft made spraying runs alternately into the east and west, moving progressively over the crop from the northern towards the southern boundary. The spraying runs were made 12 to 15 feet above the crop and, at the end of each run, the aircraft climbed to about 300 feet, made a tear drop shaped turn on to a reciprocal heading and then descended for the next run. Power cables up to 40 feet high were situated some 500 metres beyond the western boundary of the crop and the aircraft climbed above them at the end of each westerly spraying run.

At the completion of the first flight, the aircraft landed and 80 gallons of spray solution was loaded into the hopper. Spraying of the crop was then continued and the final spraying run was made to the west just inside the southern boundary of the field. At the completion of the run the aircraft climbed ahead to a height of 250 to 300 feet and witnesses then heard a reduction of engine power. A descending turn to the left was commenced and the angle of bank progressively increased to the near vertical. The aircraft had turned nearly 180 degrees when it reached a height of about 150 feet. The nose then dropped sharply and the aircraft rotated to the left as it rapidly descended, striking power cables just prior to impact with the ground in a steep nose down, port wing down attitude. A fierce fire broke out immediately.

A detailed examination of the wreckage disclosed no evidence of any defect or malfunction which may have contributed to the accident but the extent of destruction by fire severely restricted the examination. The flaps were selected to the 10 degree extended position which suggests an intention to make a small radius turn.

7. OPINION AS TO CAUSE

The probable cause of the accident was that the pilot did not maintain adequate flying speed whilst attempting to make a steep turn at a low height.

Approved for publication	 (I. M. Leslie) Delegate of the Secretary	Date 29.11.1976
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