

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
199600050**

**Cessna Aircraft Company  
Skyhawk**

**05 January 1996**

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**NOTE: All air safety occurrences reported to the ATSB are categorised and recorded. For a detailed explanation on Category definitions please refer to the ATSB website at [www.atsb.gov.au](http://www.atsb.gov.au).**

**Occurrence Number:** 199600050                      **Occurrence Type:** Accident  
**Location:** Bribie Island  
**State:** QLD    **Inv Category:** 3  
**Date:** Friday 05 January 1996  
**Time:** 1456 hours                                      **Time Zone** EST  
**Highest Injury Level:** Fatal  
**Injuries:**

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	Total
Crew	1	0	0	0	1
Ground	0	0	0	0	0
Passenger	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>

**Aircraft Manufacturer:** Cessna Aircraft Company  
**Aircraft Model:** 172N  
**Aircraft Registration:** VH-DDW                      **Serial Number:** 17268391  
**Type of Operation:** Non-commercial Business  
**Damage to Aircraft:** Destroyed  
**Departure Point:** Caloundra QLD  
**Departure Time:** 1448 EST  
**Destination:** Kooralbyn QLD

**Crew Details:**

		<b>Hours on</b>	
<b>Role</b>	<b>Class of Licence</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Hours Total</b>
Pilot-In-Command	Private	70.0	150

**Approved for Release:** Thursday, November 21, 1996

**FACTUAL INFORMATION**

The aircraft had been hired in Victoria by the pilot for an extended private business trip to south-east Queensland. The aircraft disappeared on a NOSAR (no search and rescue watch) flight from Caloundra to Kooralbyn via Jacobs Well. The aircraft had not been reported missing and there was no evidence that the pilot had made any arrangements for a private SARWATCH. The pilot was not rated for flight in instrument flying conditions.

On 8 January 1996, a body, later identified as that of a passenger in the aircraft, was washed up on a beach near Caloundra and some aircraft wreckage was found on a beach at the south-eastern end of Bribie Island. The pilot's body was found in the same area the following day. Later, a member of the public handed to police additional pieces of wreckage which he had found in the area on 5 January.

Recorded data from the Brisbane Terminal Area radar (TAR) revealed that the aircraft tracked along the Bribie Island coast to a point three kilometres north-north-west of Woorim near the ocean beach. It disappeared from radar at the completion of a 180-degree left turn at 1456 EST. The aircraft was outside controlled airspace at the time and its transponder was not operating. The Bureau of Meteorology weather radar information showed a large rain squall at the southern end of Bribie Island between 1440 and 1520. Correlation with the TAR-recorded information showed that the aircraft entered the area of the rain squall. Another pilot, who was conducting a scenic flight near the Glass House Mountains, confirmed that the southern end of Bribie Island was obscured by a heavy rain squall at the time of the disappearance.

The aircraft was fitted with an ELT which complied with TSO C91. No reports were received that indicated that the ELT operated during the accident sequence.

The aircraft has not been recovered.

## ANALYSIS

Radar plots showed that the aircraft entered a heavy rain squall. The 180-degree turn may have been an attempt by the pilot to regain visual flight, but during the turn, control of the aircraft was probably lost.

## SIGNIFICANT FACTORS

1. The pilot did not hold an instrument rating.
2. The aircraft entered a rain squall.