



**Australian Government**

**Australian Transport Safety Bureau**

# Loss of control involving a Cessna 172, VH-IGS

93 km SE of Port Pirie aerodrome, South Australia, 31 October 2013

**ATSB Transport Safety Report**  
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#### **Addendum**

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# Loss of control involving a Cessna 172, VH-IGS

## What happened

On 31 October 2013, a Cessna 172 aircraft, registered VH-IGS (IGS), departed Parafield on a private flight to the Gum Creek area near Clare, South Australia. The pilot was the sole occupant on board.

Earlier that day, the pilot had flown IGS to Parafield to pick up a part needed to repair a hay cutting machine. There was a delay of a couple of hours in the part arriving, so the flight departed Parafield around 1200 Central Daylight-savings Time.<sup>1</sup>

The pilot felt pressure to repair the broken machine, to allow the harvest to continue, so planned to land on a gravel road in the Gum Creek area, close to the where the hay cutting machine was parked (Figure 1).

At about 1300, when overhead the selected road at Gum Creek, the pilot conducted a couple of precautionary searches at about 500 ft above ground level (AGL) to identify any potential obstacles during the landing. At this time, he also noted the dust from trucks on a nearby road hanging in the air, indicating very little wind. The flight from Parafield to Gum Creek had also been in minimal wind, so the pilot was not overly concerned about which direction to land. He did, however, identify a single powerline spanning the road, almost at right angles to the selected section of road.

He commenced the approach, taking care to clear the powerline before initiating a descent onto the road. With the aircraft lined up with the centre of the 10 m wide road, and close to the flare,<sup>2</sup> the pilot reported a gust of wind came through a clump of trees on the right of the road, and pushed IGS well to the left. At this point, the aircraft was travelling at about 40 kt, with 30° of flap<sup>3</sup>, and the stall warning had just sounded.

Concerned about the proximity of the aircraft to the trees and fence, the pilot decided to conduct a go-around. At this point, the left wheel of IGS was in contact with the road. He applied full power and reported applying pressure to the control column in an attempt to raise the nose and gain some flying speed with the flaps still selected at 30°.

However, IGS continued moving rapidly to the left, and struck a large tree, severing the left wing. The aircraft rotated about 180° and continued for about another 50 m through fences and a gateway before coming to a stop (Figure 2).

The pilot was able to egress the aircraft through the right side. He sustained minor injuries and the aircraft was substantially damaged.

VH-IGS at the accident site



Source: South Australia Police

<sup>1</sup> Central Daylight-savings Time was Universal Coordinated Time (UTC) + 10.5 hours.

<sup>2</sup> Final nose-up pitch of landing aeroplane to reduce rate of descent to approximately zero at touchdown.

<sup>3</sup> IGS had been modified to have a maximum of 30° of flap.

**Figure 1: Road used for landing**



Source: South Australia Police

**Figure 2: VH-IGS damage**



Source: South Australia Police

## General details

### Occurrence details

Date and time:	31 October 2013 – 1300 CDT	
Occurrence category:	Accident	
Primary occurrence type:	Loss of control	
Location:	93 km SE of Port Pirie aerodrome, South Australia	
	Latitude: 33° 146.50' S	Longitude: 138° 45.80' E

### Aircraft details

Manufacturer and model:	Cessna Aircraft Company 172N	
Registration:	VH-IGS	
Serial number:	17270677	
Type of operation:	Private	
Persons on board:	Crew – 1	Passengers – Nil
Injuries:	Crew – 1 (Minor)	Passengers – Nil
Damage:	Substantial	

## About the ATSB

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) is an independent Commonwealth Government statutory agency. The ATSB is governed by a Commission and is entirely separate from transport regulators, policy makers and service providers. The ATSB's function is to improve safety and public confidence in the aviation, marine and rail modes of transport through excellence in: independent investigation of transport accidents and other safety occurrences; safety data recording, analysis and research; and fostering safety awareness, knowledge and action.

The ATSB is responsible for investigating accidents and other transport safety matters involving civil aviation, marine and rail operations in Australia that fall within Commonwealth jurisdiction, as well as participating in overseas investigations involving Australian registered aircraft and ships. A primary concern is the safety of commercial transport, with particular regard to fare-paying passenger operations.

The ATSB performs its functions in accordance with the provisions of the *Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003* and Regulations and, where applicable, relevant international agreements.

The object of a safety investigation is to identify and reduce safety-related risk. ATSB investigations determine and communicate the safety factors related to the transport safety matter being investigated.

It is not a function of the ATSB to apportion blame or determine liability. At the same time, an investigation report must include factual material of sufficient weight to support the analysis and findings. At all times the ATSB endeavours to balance the use of material that could imply adverse comment with the need to properly explain what happened, and why, in a fair and unbiased manner.

## About this report

Decisions regarding whether to conduct an investigation, and the scope of an investigation, are based on many factors, including the level of safety benefit likely to be obtained from an investigation. For this occurrence, a limited-scope, fact-gathering investigation was conducted in order to produce a short summary report, and allow for greater industry awareness of potential safety issues and possible safety actions.