



GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

Reference No.

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SUMMARY REPORT

SI/764/1036

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

1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

| | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| 10 kilometres north of Burra, South Australia | Height a.m.s.l. 2225 feet | Date 24. 9. 76 | Time (Local) 0810 hours | Zone CST |
|---|------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------|

THE AIRCRAFT

| | | |
|---|------------------------|---|
| Make and Model Piper PA28/180 Cherokee | Registration VH-AGG | Certificate of Airworthiness Valid from 15. 11. 74 |
| Certificate of Registration issued to I, | Operator | Degree of damage to aircraft Destroyed |
| | | Other property damaged Nil |
| Defects discovered Nil | | |

3. THE FLIGHT

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Last or intended departure point Strathalbyn | Time of departure 0712 hours | Next point of intended landing Leigh Creek | Purpose of flight Travel | Class of operation Private |
|---|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|

4. THE CREW

| Name | Status | Age | Class of licence | Hours on type | Total hours | Degree of injury |
|------|--------|-----|------------------|---------------|-------------|------------------|
| | Pilot | 33 | Private | 33 | 82 | Fatal |

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

| Name | Status | Degree of injury | Name | Status | Degree of injury |
|------|-----------|------------------|------|-----------|------------------|
| | Passenger | Fatal | | Passenger | Fatal |
| | Passenger | Fatal | | | |

6. RELEVANT EVENTS

The pilot was issued with a private pilot licence, endorsed with an area restriction, on 23.12.75. Following the successful completion of the required navigation training, the area restriction endorsement was cancelled on 21.6.76. He did not hold an instrument rating and was therefore restricted to flight under the Visual Flight Rules (VFR). At about 0530 hours he telephoned the Parafield Briefing Office and, after obtaining the relevant meteorological forecasts, submitted flight plan details for a VFR flight from Strathalbyn to Ayers Rock with intermediate landings at Leigh Creek and Oodnadatta. For the initial route segment along the North Mount Lofty Ranges the forecast indicated a south-east airflow with scattered stratus cloud base 1200 feet, scattered cumulus cloud base 2500 feet, broken strato-cumulus base 3500 feet and visibility 35 kilometres reducing to 10 kilometres in showers and drizzle. After departure, the pilot established radio communication with the Adelaide Flight Service Unit and advised that he was climbing to 3500 feet. At 0728 hours he reported his position as Mount Pleasant and that he was descending to 3000 feet to remain in VMC (Visual Meteorological Conditions). Three minutes later he reported descending to 2500 feet and at 0745 hours, that his position was Eudunda. The last transmission received from the aircraft was at 0746 hours when the pilot acknowledged a frequency transfer instruction.

At approximately 0800 hours an aircraft was observed to approach the township of Burra (elevation approx. 1540 feet) from the south and make a 360 degree turn to the left. The aircraft was at an estimated height of 300 feet, below overcast cloud, and it departed Burra on a northerly heading towards the hilly terrain surrounding Mount Cone (elevation 2601 feet) where there was extensive low cloud and fog. Several minutes later the high pitched sound of an aircraft engine was heard and an aircraft was briefly observed to emerge from cloud at high speed and disappear behind a hill immediately to the west of Mount Cone. The sound of a crash was then heard. VH-AGG struck the ground at high speed on the northern slope of a hill. It was in a steep nosedown attitude on a northerly heading at the time of impact. Detailed examination of the wreckage did not reveal evidence of any defect or malfunction which may have contributed to the accident.

7. OPINION AS TO CAUSE

The probable cause of the accident was that the pilot persisted with the flight into weather conditions in which he was not able to maintain the visual reference required for him to retain control of the aircraft.

Approved for
publication(R. H. Watts)
Delegate of the Secretary

Date 11.1.78

DEFINITIONS

ACCIDENT - An occurrence associated with the operation of an aircraft which takes place between the time any person boards the aircraft with the intention of flight until such time as all those persons have disembarked and in which

- (a) any person suffers death or serious injury as a result of being in or upon the aircraft or by direct contact with the aircraft or anything attached to the aircraft; or

Note. - Specifically excluded are: death from natural causes and fatal or serious injury to any person on board whether self-inflicted or inflicted by another person, or to ground support personnel before or after flight, or fatal or serious injury which is not a direct result of the operation of the aircraft, or which concerns stowaways.

- (b) the aircraft suffers substantial damage or is destroyed; or
- (c) the aircraft is missing or is completely inaccessible.

FATAL INJURY - Any injury which results in death within 30 days.

SERIOUS INJURY - Any injury other than a fatal injury which

- (a) requires hospitalisation for more than 48 hours, commencing within seven days from the date the injury was received; or
- (b) results in a fracture of any bone (except simple fractures of fingers, toes or nose); or
- (c) involves lacerations which cause severe haemorrhages, nerve, muscle or tendon damage; or
- (d) involves injury to any internal organ; or
- (e) involves second or third degree burns, or any burns affecting more than five percent of the body surface.

MINOR INJURY - Any injury other than as defined under "Fatal Injury" or "Serious Injury".

DESTROYED - Consumed by fire, demolished or damaged beyond repair.

SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE - Damage or structural failure which adversely affects the structural strength, performance or flight characteristics of the aircraft and which would normally require major repair or replacement of the affected component. The following types of damage are specifically excluded: engine failure; damage limited to an engine or its accessories, or to propeller blades; bent fairings or cowlings; small dents or puncture holes in the skin; damage to wing tips, antennas, tires, or brakes.

MINOR DAMAGE - Damage other than as defined under "Destroyed" or "Substantial Damage".