



**AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SUMMARY REPORT**

SI/762/1041

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

**1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE**

40 kilometres north of Rankins Springs, New South Wales	Height a.m.s.l. 1600 feet	Date 30.7.76	Time (Local) 0851 hours	Zone EST
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**2. THE AIRCRAFT**

Make and Model Cessna 182G	Registration VH-DGT	Certificate of Airworthiness Valid from 9.10.75
Certificate of Registration issued to M. L. McDonald Myrtle Downs via Barham NEW SOUTH WALES	Operator M. L. McDonald Myrtle Downs via Barham NEW SOUTH WALES	Degree of damage to aircraft <b>Destroyed</b> Other property damaged Nil
Defects discovered Nil		

**3. THE FLIGHT**

Last or intended departure point Pevensey Station	Time of departure 0809 hours	Next point of intended landing Narromine	Purpose of flight Travel	Class of operation Private
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**4. THE CREW**

Name	Status	Age	Class of licence	Hours on type	Total hours	Degree of injury
Murray Letcher McDONALD	Pilot	34	Private	95	141	Fatal

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

Name	Status	Degree of injury	Name	Status	Degree of injury
Maeme Charles McDONALD	Passenger	Fatal	Anthony John Robert SETTREE	Passenger	Fatal
Francis Albert McDONALD	Passenger	Fatal			

**6. RELEVANT EVENTS**

The pilot, who did not hold an instrument rating and was therefore restricted to flight under the Visual Flight Rules, submitted details by telephone to Moorabbin Briefing Office for a flight from Old Cobram Station to Narromine via Pevensey Station and return. He was briefed concerning the relevant meteorological forecasts which predicted that he would encounter scattered stratus cloud with a base of 2000 feet, broken cumulus cloud with a base of 4000 feet and the visibility would be 40 kilometres reducing to 5000 metres in rain showers.

The aircraft departed Old Cobram Station at 0720 hours and at 0751 hours, prior to landing at Pevensey Station, the pilot reported that he had encountered light fog in the circuit area. At 0809 hours the pilot reported that he had departed Pevensey Station and, at 0834 hours, he established communications with Sydney Flight Service Unit and reported that he had passed Goolgowi at 1500 feet and estimated arrival over Condobolin at 0917 hours. No further communications were received from the aircraft.

At about 0840 hours an aircraft was observed and heard flying in the area some 50 kilometres north-east of Goolgowi. It was at a very low altitude and was heading north-easterly towards the hilly terrain surrounding Mount Malogone (elevation 1671 feet). It appeared to be in stable flight and its engine noise was normal. There was extensive low cloud in the area and the tops of the nearby hills were obscured. The aircraft subsequently appeared to enter cloud as it disappeared from view.

The time nominated by the pilot for the initiation of search and rescue action was 1800 hours. When nothing was heard from the pilot by this time attempts were made to ascertain the whereabouts of the aircraft. The attempts were unsuccessful and, at 2240 hours, the Distress Phase was declared and search action commenced. The burnt-out wreckage of the aircraft was located at 1120 hours on the following day, on the south-west slopes of Mount Malogone some 70 feet below the crest. The aircraft had struck trees in a wings-level, climbing attitude on a north-easterly heading. Detailed examination of the wreckage did not reveal evidence of any defect or malfunction which may have contributed to the accident.

**OPINION AS TO CAUSE**

The probable cause of the accident was that the pilot continued the flight into weather conditions in which he was not able to maintain the visual references necessary to ensure adequate terrain clearance.

Approved for publication	<i>R. H. Watts</i> ( R. H. Watts ) Delegate of the Secretary	Date 20.9.77
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