

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199003075**

Cessna 177-RG

16 June 1990

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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.

Occurrence Number: 199003075 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: 7km north-west of Longreach QLD
Date: 16 June 1990 **Time:** 1510
Highest Injury Level: Fatal
Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	1	1	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	1	0	0	0
Total	2	1	0	0

Aircraft Details: Cessna 177-RG
Registration: VH-XBL
Serial Number: 177RG 0577
Operation Type: Aerial Work
Damage Level: Destroyed
Departure Point: Longreach QLD
Departure Time: 1432
Destination: Longreach QLD

Approved for Release: 15th November 1990

Circumstances:

As part of their commercial pilot training scheme, the flying school sent five trainees supervised by two instructors, in two aircraft to further their experience by operating from a remote aerodrome. The two aircraft arrived at Longreach Aerodrome before noon on the day of the accident. The instructor in charge of the operation had apparently decided to take two trainees flying in the local area. The flight was authorised for radio navigation aid training. The aircraft was later seen over a period of time, flying at heights judged as 100 feet and lower over the flooded Thomson River. Later, some two kilometres north-west of the Thomson River, two stockmen saw the aircraft flying parallel to the Winton road towards Longreach township when suddenly the wings separated from the fuselage which then crashed to the ground. The aircraft had flown into a subsidiary powerline strung across the main road. Two steel wires had struck the windscreen and had sliced both wings and centre support section away from the fuselage. The span of the wire struck was 239 metres. The point of impact was 8.2 metres above ground level and 67 metres from the main feeder powerline which parallels the far side of the main road. At the time of the accident, the wind was calm, the sky was clear of cloud, and the sun was directly behind the aircraft. Although the visibility was excellent, tests conducted exactly 24 hours after the accident revealed that the wires would not have been visible to the pilots in time to avoid a collision.

Significant Factors:

The following factors were considered relevant to the development of the accident

1. The pilots were engaged in an unnecessarily hazardous operation - low flying.
2. The pilots were unfamiliar with the local area.

3. The pilots did not see the subsidiary power line in time to take collision avoidance action.