

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SUMMARY REPORT

AS/721/1040

Publication of this report is authorised by the Director-General of Civil Aviation under the provisions of Air Navigation Regulation 283(1)

1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

Bowenville, Queensland	Height a.m.s.l. 1200 feet	Date 16.12.72	Time (Local) 1430 hours	Zone EST
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2. THE AIRCRAFT

Make and Model Cherokee II Glider	Registration VH-GRD	Certificate of Airworthiness Valid from 26.9.1971 to 25.9.1974
Certificate No. [REDACTED]	Operator [REDACTED]	Degree of damage to aircraft Substantial
Defects discovered Nil		Other property damaged Nil

3. THE FLIGHT

Last or intended departure point McCaffery's Airfield, Bowenville	Time of departure 1428 hours	Next point of intended landing Point of departure	Purpose of flight Local gliding	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
[REDACTED]	Pilot	16	Not applicable	Less than 5 mins.	28	Fatal

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

Name	Status	Degree of injury	Name	Status	Degree of injury

6. RELEVANT EVENTS

The Cherokee II type of glider is of plywood construction and accommodates only one occupant. Miss [REDACTED] had made only one previous flight in the type some months previously and, on that occasion, she released the tow cable during the launch because of excessive winch speed. She subsequently made a satisfactory landing.

On the day of this accident she completed a satisfactory check flight with an instructor in a two-seat glider. This flight included a simulated cable break during the winch launch at a height of some 400 feet. The weather was fine and clear, the wind was light and from the north-west, the air temperature was about 30°C. In preparation for her flight in VH-GRD, Miss [REDACTED] was briefed regarding the operation of the glider by her father, who is an experienced glider pilot and was to operate the winch for the launch. She then seated herself in the glider and fastened her restraining harness and, while her father was preparing the tow cable and winch for operation, she was further briefed by the instructor who had accompanied her on the check flight. The glider was then launched into the west and, initially, appeared to be operating normally. However, at a height of about 600 feet it appeared to be climbing in a nose high attitude at a slower than normal speed. The port wing then lowered, a turn to the left commenced and the tow cable released from the glider. The turn developed into a spin and, after two complete turns, the rate of spin appeared to decrease momentarily but it then resumed and continued until the glider struck the ground in a steep nose down attitude.

OPINION AS TO CAUSE

There is insufficient evidence to determine the cause of this accident.

Approved for
publication

(FRANK E. YEEND)

Delegated of the Director-General of Civil Aviation

Date
20.11.1974