



Australian Government

Australian Transport Safety Bureau

Collision with terrain involving a Victa 115 Airtourer, VH-MUV

Leongatha Airport, Victoria on 29 May 2015

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Addendum

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Collision with terrain involving a Victa 115 Airtourer, VH-MUV

What happened

On 29 May 2015, at about 1145 Eastern Standard Time (EST), a Victa 115 Airtourer aircraft, registered VH-MUV (MUV), departed from Leongatha Airport, Victoria, for crosswind circuit training, with an instructor and student on board.

The student pilot was flying the first circuit. The instructor reported that the circuit was normal and the approach was stable up to about 100 ft above ground level (AGL) when the student put the final stage of flap out. As the aircraft flared to land on runway 22, a strong gust of wind blew the aircraft off the runway centreline to the left and the aircraft bounced hard. The student initiated a go-around, applying full power, with the aircraft still drifting further to the left. As the aircraft was not climbing, the instructor called “taking over” and the student handed over control of the aircraft. The instructor lowered the nose of the aircraft to gain airspeed.

The aircraft continued to drift further away from the runway centreline. The student noticed the flaps were in the down position and, thinking that it would assist and without checking with the instructor, retracted the flaps to the up position. The aircraft descended and about 100 m past the threshold of runway 22, the aircraft collided with the airport perimeter fence. After a further 20 m, the aircraft flipped over the fence and came to rest upside down. The instructor and student exited the aircraft quickly through the broken canopy, as fuel was gushing from the fuel tanks. The instructor and student pilot received minor injuries and the aircraft was substantially damaged (Figure 1).

Figure 1: VH-MUV inverted after flipping over the airport perimeter fence



Source: Aircraft operator

Instructor comment

The instructor reported that the purpose of the flight was to instruct the student in crosswind landing techniques and then to conduct further flight training in the training area. The instructor indicated that, as they were planning to conduct 2 hours of flight training, the aircraft had full fuel on board and was near the aircraft maximum take-off weight.

The instructor described the wind as gusting between 15 to 22 kt at 270 degrees, with a crosswind component of between 10 to 15 kt.

Safety action

Whether or not the ATSB identifies safety issues in the course of an investigation, relevant organisations may proactively initiate safety action in order to reduce their safety risk. The ATSB has been advised of the following safety action in response to this occurrence.

Flight training organisation

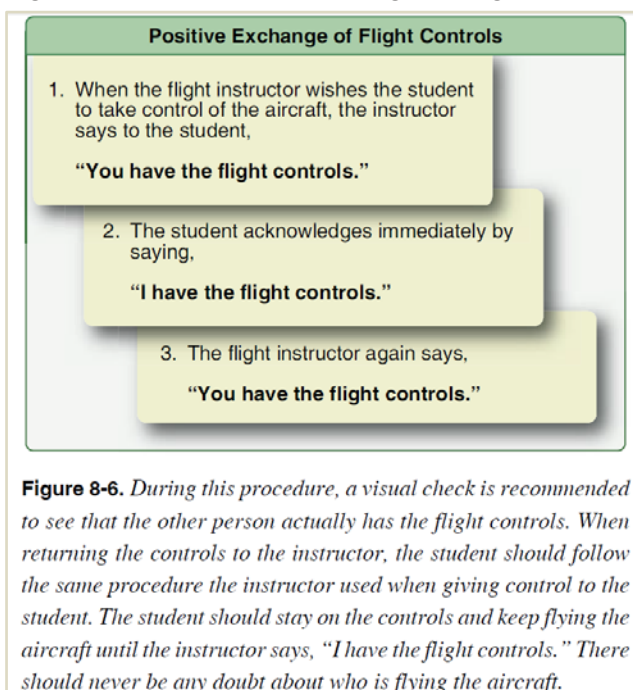
As a result of this accident, the flight training organisation advised the ATSB that they are taking the following safety actions:

- The instructor has been briefed on the importance of making sure students understand not to touch any of the aircraft's controls when the instructor is in control of the aircraft.
- The instructor has been briefed on the handing over and taking over procedures with the emphasis on handing over and taking over controls procedures.

Safety message

It is important in flight training to have a positive exchange of flight controls. The US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has found that numerous accidents have occurred due to a lack of communication or misunderstanding regarding who had actual control of the aircraft, particularly between students and flight instructors. The FAA publication [Aviation Instructor's Handbook](#), includes a section on the Positive Exchange of Flight Controls. The handbook provides guidance to use for the positive exchange of flight controls (Figure 2).

Figure 2: FAA Positive exchange of Flight Controls



Source: US Federal Aviation Administration

General details

Occurrence details

Date and time:	29 May 2015 – 1200 EST	
Occurrence category:	Accident	
Primary occurrence type:	Collision with terrain	
Location:	Leongatha Airport, Victoria	
	Latitude: 38° 29.73' S	Longitude: 145° 51.58' E

Aircraft details

Manufacturer and model:	Victa 115 Airtourer	
Registration:	VH-MUV	
Serial number:	96	
Type of operation:	Flying Training	
Persons on board:	Crew – 2	Passengers – 0
Injuries:	Crew – 2	Passengers – 0
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.