

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199501785**

**Gippsland Aeronautic Pty Ltd
Fatboy**

16 June 1995

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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.

The Bureau did not conduct an on scene investigation of this occurrence. The information presented below was obtained from information supplied to the Bureau.

Occurrence Number: 199501785 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: 30km E Hillston, (ALA)
State: NSW **Inv Category:** 4
Date: Friday 16 June 1995
Time: 0830 hours **Time Zone** EST
Highest Injury Level: None

Aircraft Manufacturer: Gippsland Aeronautic Pty Ltd
Aircraft Model: GA-200
Aircraft Registration: VH-SKG **Serial Number:** 200-9102
Type of Operation: Commercial Aerial Agriculture - Other
Damage to Aircraft: Destroyed
Departure Point: Griffith NSW
Departure Time: 0700 EST
Destination: Hillston NSW

Crew Details:

<u>Role</u>	<u>Class of Licence</u>	<u>Hours on Type</u>	<u>Hours Total</u>
Pilot-In-Command	Commercial	450.0	1074

Approved for Release: Friday, July 21, 1995

The aircraft departed Griffith for a chemical spraying operation in the Hillston area. A considerable amount of fog and low cloud was encountered enroute, however, the pilot said he had been assured by the farmer at Hillston that the area was clear.

Nearing Hillston the pilot was unable to find a break in the cloud cover, so he elected to track to the east to find an opening, but was unsuccessful. Shortly after commencing a return to Griffith the pilot said he found a large cloud break. He notified his base of his intentions and descended below the cloud base. After passing over a low range of hills he descended to about 300 feet above ground level to continue to remain clear of cloud, but shortly after he was unable to prevent the aircraft from entering lower cloud.

The pilot commenced a slow turn, still able to see the ground immediately below the aircraft. However, he was unable to outclimb rising terrain, despite attempting to dump the chemical load. The aircraft consequently struck the ground and was destroyed, however, the pilot was able to vacate the aircraft without injury.