

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
199800218**

**Cessna Aircraft Company  
182L**

**23 January 1998**

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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](http://www.atsb.gov.au).**

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**Occurrence Number:** 199800218                      **Occurrence Type:** Accident  
**Location:** Jerramungup, (ALA)  
**State:** WA    **Inv Category:** 4  
**Date:** Friday 23 January 1998  
**Time:** 1615 hours                              **Time Zone**                      WST  
**Highest Injury Level:** Fatal  
**Injuries:**

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	Total
Crew	0	1	0	0	1
Ground	0	0	0	0	0
Passenger	2	1	0	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>

**Aircraft Manufacturer:** Cessna Aircraft Company  
**Aircraft Model:** 182L  
**Aircraft Registration:** VH-EFX                      **Serial Number:** 18258991  
**Type of Operation:** Non-commercial Pleasure/Travel  
**Damage to Aircraft:** Destroyed  
**Departure Point:** Jandakot WA  
**Departure Time:**  
**Destination:** Jerramungup WA

**Approved for Release:** Saturday, July 11, 1998

The Cessna 182 with one pilot and three passengers was on a private flight from Jandakot to a property located near Jerramungup. The aircraft had dual controls installed and a passenger was occupying the right front seat. The pilot was planning to land in a paddock which he had previously used on several occasions. The paddock was orientated east-west and had approximately 800 m available for landing. The weather was clear with approximately 12 kts of southerly breeze.

The pilot reported that he had decided to make a low pass at approximately 70 ft AGL over the paddock to assess the wind conditions and reconnoitre the landing area. During the pass, the aircraft rapidly descended and struck the ground approximately half-way down the paddock's length. Evidence indicated that the aircraft bounced and skidded approximately 240 m before the left wing struck a tree located at the north-east corner of the paddock. When the left wing struck the tree, it was observed to catch fire. The aircraft then cartwheeled and skidded approximately 72 m before coming to rest on its right side against a fence on the eastern boundary of the paddock. The aircraft then exploded. The passenger from the left rear seat first escaped the burning wreckage, running north through the flames. The pilot escaped soon after, running south. The two remaining passengers did not escape. Both surviving passengers received extensive burn injuries. The aircraft wreckage was substantially destroyed by the fire. There was no evidence to indicate that the aircraft had suffered any mechanical problems before striking the ground.

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The only witness to the accident reported that he had not seen the aircraft approach the strip, first seeing the aircraft after it had hit the tree. The witness and his wife provided first aid to the two survivors.

The survivors reported that the passenger in the front right seat was suffering discomfort due to airsickness during the flight and that during the low pass over the paddock, this passenger had panicked and pushed on the control yoke. The pilot reported that he was initially unaware of the passenger's action as he was looking through his window assessing the landing conditions. When he noticed that the aircraft was descending, he returned his attention to inside the aircraft and noticed the passenger pushing on the yoke. He then attempted to brush the passenger's hands away from the control yoke but was unable to overpower the passenger's control input before the aircraft struck the ground. The pilot reported that he closed the throttle as the aircraft approached the ground. After the aircraft struck the ground, it bounced and continued forward. Because the aircraft was heading for a tree, the pilot reported that he fully opened the throttle and pulled back on the control yoke in an attempt to carry out an overshoot, but the aircraft failed to become sufficiently airborne to avoid the left wing striking the tree.

The passenger who had pushed on the control yoke was reported to have suffered severe airsickness during previous flights. Although she usually occupied a rear seat during these previous flights, she had occasionally occupied the front passenger seat but had never interfered with the controls.

Evidence indicated that whilst the pilot was conducting a low reconnaissance of the landing area, the passenger in the right front seat pushed on the control yoke. There was probably insufficient altitude available for the pilot to regain control before the aircraft struck the ground.

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