

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198700738**

Cessna 210M

9 July 1987

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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: 198700738
Location: Roper River NT
Date: 9 July 1987
Highest Injury Level: Minor
Injuries:

Occurrence Type: Accident

Time: 1530

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

Aircraft Details: Cessna 210M
Registration: VH-WRD
Serial Number: 210-62942
Operation Type: Charter (Passenger)
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: Mataranka NT
Departure Time: 1530
Destination: Roper River NT

Approved for Release: July 28th 1987

Circumstances:

As the aircraft turned onto final, the pilot noticed a large bird (later identified as a kite hawk) above and assessed that the aircraft would pass beneath it. However, the bird rolled over, dived and struck the windshield. The sudden heavy impact smashed the perspex into small pieces which cut the pilot about the face and chest. The broken windshield resulted in a substantial increase in the descent rate which required a considerable increase in power to overcome. A difficult landing was further complicated by a reduction in visibility due to windblast, blood and feathers. Although the pilot's sunglasses and headset were knocked from his head, had he not been wearing glasses it is probable that he would have been blinded as a result of the collision. The specialist ornithologist reported that large birds like kite hawks and eagles have only one evasive manoeuvre and that is to fold their wings and dive. However, if given sufficient warning they will simply turn away from an aircraft. Given that they are adept at avoiding collisions, this bird was caught unawares probably by the low power setting of the engine whilst the aircraft was on approach. When surprised by the proximity of the aircraft it reverted to instinct.