

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199304119**

**Cessna Aircraft Company
Centurion**

13 December 1993

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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: 199304119 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: 12km NE Bindook
State: NSW **Inv Category:** 3
Date: Monday 13 December 1993
Time: 1920 hours **Time Zone** ESuT
Highest Injury Level: Fatal
Injuries:

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

Aircraft Manufacturer: Cessna Aircraft Company
Aircraft Model: 210K
Aircraft Registration: VH-SIK **Serial Number:** 21059413
Type of Operation: Charter Cargo
Damage to Aircraft: Destroyed
Departure Point: Canberra ACT
Departure Time: 1836 ESuT
Destination: Bankstown NSW

Crew Details:

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on Type	Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	Commercial	400.0	600

Approved for Release: Thursday, December 1, 1994

The aircraft was engaged on an IFR freight operation from Bankstown to Canberra and return. The flight from Bankstown to Canberra was uneventful and the aircraft subsequently departed for Bankstown at 1836 ESuT, carrying about 45 kg of light freight. A flight plan submitted by the pilot indicated the aircraft was to track via Shellys at 7,000 ft, thence to Bankstown outside controlled airspace (OCTA).

The pilot reported to Sydney Flight Service over Shellys at 1900, maintaining 7,000 ft, and estimating Bankstown at 1927. Three minutes later the pilot reported commencing descent, and subsequently reported on descent to Flight Service at 1906 after a frequency change. No further radio transmissions were received from the aircraft. Weather reports indicated that instrument meteorological conditions were prevailing in the area at the time.

The wreckage of the aircraft was located the following afternoon on the eastern slope of Axehead Mountain at an elevation of about 2,145 ft. The damage to the aircraft was consistent with having struck trees at cruising speed in straight and slightly descending flight, on a track of about 2930M. Both fuel tanks were completely disrupted and the wreckage had been largely incinerated in the subsequent fire.

Later examination of the wreckage indicated the aircraft had been capable of normal operation at the time of the accident.

Recorded radar data showed that at 1906 the aircraft was tracking inbound on the 2200 radial of the Sydney VOR at a range of 50 NM, and passing through an altitude of 5,600 ft. When the aircraft was at a range of about 40 NM from Sydney, at an altitude of about 4,300 ft, it was observed to turn left and take up a track of about 2900, still gradually descending. The aircraft continued to maintain this track for a further 22 NM before it faded from radar. The last recorded altitude was at 2,900 ft. At the time of the accident the aircraft was OCTA and not under radar control. Radar returns from the aircraft transponder were suppressed from radar displays to reduce clutter, in accordance with normal operating procedures.

An examination of the medical history of the pilot showed no evidence of any cardiovascular disease or cerebrovascular disease risk factors. He was aged 49 years and held a current Class 1 medical certificate. An ECG performed at his last medical examination indicated a slight conduction defect, but in the absence of other indications of cardiovascular disease the pilot was assessed as fit.

From the evidence available, the flight path of the aircraft was consistent with the pilot becoming incapacitated as the aircraft descended towards Bankstown. The left turn at 40 NM from Sydney onto a heading of about 2900 is considered to have been unintentional as the subsequent track, which was about 1000 left of the flight planned track, took the descending aircraft towards mountainous terrain which was obscured by low cloud. The final track was not directed to any known tracking aid.

Significant Factor

The pilot probably suffered a sudden incapacitation during flight which rendered him incapable of continuing to safely operate the aircraft.