

1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

15 miles north west of Nowra, New South Wales.	Height a.m.s.l. (ft) 1800 feet	Date 5.6.71	Time (Local) 1040 Approx.	Zone EST
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2. THE AIRCRAFT

Make and Model Cessna 172H	Registration VH-KWX	Certificate of Airworthiness	Valid from 29.12.66	Valid to 28.12.75
Registered Owner Southbank Aviation Pty. Ltd., P. O. Box 1253, Wollongong, New South Wales.	Operator T. T. Visscher, 28 Canberra Road, Lake Heights, New South Wales.		Degree of damage to aircraft Destroyed	Other property damaged Nil.

Defects discovered

3. THE FLIGHT

Last or intended departure point Wollongong	Time of departure 0958	Next point of intended landing Wollongong	Purpose of flight Travel	Class of operation Private
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THE CREW

Name Timothy Troy VISSCHER	Status Pilot	Age 21	Class of licence Private	Hours on type 18	Total hours 120	Degree of injury Minor
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5. OTHER PERSONS (All passengers and persons injured on ground)

Name Donald Allan HARMAN Janice Patricia HARMAN	Status Passenger Passenger	Degree of injury Minor Minor	Name Janice Lyall SMITH	Status Passenger	Degree of injury Minor
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6. CONTRAVENTIONS OF REGULATIONS AND ORDERS

Regulation or Order No. A.N.R. 149(2)	Nature of contravention The pilot flew the aircraft into cloud whilst engaged on a flight under the Visual Flight Rules.
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RELEVANT EVENTS

The flight had been planned as a scenic tour of the snowfields near Cooma and two of the passengers had travelled a considerable distance to participate. The forecast ordered for the route indicated that the weather was unsatisfactory and the flight was postponed and a second forecast was then obtained. The pilot decided that the flight was possible under the Visual Flight Rules although the first part of the route would have to be flown above cloud. After taking off the aircraft climbed through a hole in the cloud and set course, climbing to 8,000 feet on top of complete cloud cover. Shortly afterwards the pilot was advised by radio that a light aircraft in the area had reported 8/8 cloud, base 5,500 feet and the pilot elected to descend through the cloud although he held no instrument rating and had virtually no experience of instrument flying. With the aircraft still in cloud at 4,200 feet, the pilot turned back towards Wollongong and began to climb to regain visual flight. Before he was able to top the cloud, the instruments appeared to give some unexpected indications and the pilot lost control. Several violent manoeuvres then took place before control was regained and the climb resumed. Again the pilot was unable to maintain control and eventually the aircraft broke cloud just above heavy timber in conditions of very limited visibility. This situation left the pilot with a severely restricted choice of alternatives and the aircraft was subsequently flown into the tops of the trees and crashed to the ground 120 feet below.

8. OPINION AS TO CAUSE

The probable cause of the accident was that the pilot, who was not qualified to control the aircraft by reference to the instruments, entered weather conditions in which visual flight could not be sustained.

Report approved

(D.S. GRAHAM)

Designation
Assistant Director-General
(Air Safety Investigation)Date
6.10.71