

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SUMMARY REPORT

Reference No.

AS/725/1013

1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

15 miles north of Doodlakine, Western Australia

Height a.m.s.l. (ft)
1000 feetDate
29.7.72Time (Local)
1610Zone
WST

THE AIRCRAFT

Make and Model Cessna 170A	Registration VH-DFS	Certificate of Airworthiness	Valid from 3.6.66	Valid to 2.6.75
Registered Owner A.F. & W.J. Mather, P.O. Box 41, Kellerberrin, Western Australia	Operator A.F. Mather, P.O. Box 41, Kellerberrin, Western Australia	Degree of damage to aircraft Destroyed		
		Other property damaged Power line		
Defects discovered Nil.				

3. THE FLIGHT

Last or intended departure point 10 miles north of Merredin	Time of departure 1600 approximately	Next point of intended landing Kellerberrin	Purpose of flight Travel	Class of operation Private
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4. THE CREW

Name	Status	Age	Class of licence	Hours on type	Total hours	Degree of injury
Allan Frank MATHER	Pilot	45	Private	199	1108	Fatal

5. OTHER PERSONS (All passengers and persons injured on ground)

Name	Status	Degree of injury	Name	Status	Degree of injury

6. RELEVANT EVENTS

During the afternoon the aircraft had been flown to the property of a friend of the pilot, 36 miles to the north east of Kellerberrin and whilst there, had been flown by the property owner.

A few minutes after departing on the return flight the aircraft was seen circling at a height of about 500 feet over the property of another friend of the pilot some 15 miles north of the direct track to Kellerberrin and it then departed in the general direction of its destination. The aircraft was next sighted by the owner of this property who had not been at home when the aircraft first circled his house, but was returning there by car from Doodlakine. He saw the aircraft for a short period, flying at 600 to 800 feet above ground level, about third of a mile to the right of the road on which he was travelling and on a parallel northerly course. He lost sight of the aircraft because of trees lining the road.

After travelling for a further two miles to the north, the property owner made a 90 degree turn to the right and from this road he had a clear view across the paddocks to the south. He sighted the overturned wreckage of the aircraft approximately one mile to the south of his position and some 150 feet east of the alignment of the road which he had just left.

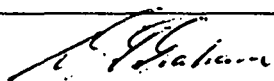
The aircraft undercarriage had caught the top wire of a power transmission line which crossed the paddock from east to west at a height of about 30 feet. The aircraft had then pitched sharply nose down and had struck the ground in an almost vertical attitude 145 feet north of the point of contact with the wire. The nose dug in to the surface of the paddock which was soft from recent rains. The engine was torn from the airframe and the main wreckage came to rest inverted some 36 feet beyond the area of initial impact with the ground.

Examination of the wreckage showed that the flaps were up. There was no defect discovered in the aircraft which could have contributed to the accident and there is evidence that the engine was operating normally up to the time of impact.

7. OPINION AS TO CAUSE

The probable cause of the accident was that the aircraft was operated at an unsafe height.

Report released


(D.S. GRAHAM)Designation
Assistant Director-General
(Air Safety Investigation)Date
20.6.73

DEFINITIONS

ACCIDENT - An occurrence associated with the operation of an aircraft which takes place between the time any person boards the aircraft with the intention of flight until such time as all those persons have disembarked and in which

- (a) any person suffers death or serious injury as a result of being in or upon the aircraft or by direct contact with the aircraft or anything attached to the aircraft; or
- (b) the aircraft suffers substantial damage.

FATAL INJURY - Any injury which results in death within 30 days.

SERIOUS INJURY - Any injury other than a fatal injury which

- (a) requires hospitalisation for more than 48 hours, commencing within seven days from the date the injury was received; or
- (b) results in a fracture of any bone (except simple fractures of fingers, toes or nose); or
- (c) involves lacerations which cause severe haemorrhages, nerve, muscle or tendon damage; or
- (d) involves injury to any internal organ; or
- (e) involves second or third degree burns, or any burns affecting more than five percent of the body surface.

MINOR INJURY - Any injury other than as defined under "Fatal Injury" or "Serious Injury".

DESTROYED - Consumed by fire, demolished or damaged beyond repair.

SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE - Damage or structural failure which adversely affects the structural strength, performance or flight characteristics of the aircraft and which would normally require major repair or replacement of the affected component. The following types of damage are specifically excluded: engine failure, damage limited to an engine, bent fairings or cowling, dented skin, small punctured holes in the skin or fabric, taxi-ing damage to propeller blades, damage to tyres, engine accessories, brakes, or wingtips.

MINOR DAMAGE - Damage other than as defined under "Destroyed" or "Substantial Damage".