

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SUMMARY REPORT

Reference No.

AS/694/1010

1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

Two miles south-south-east of Waikerie, South Australia	Height a.m.s.l. (ft) 150 feet	Date 18.4.69	Time (Local) 1340	Zone CST
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2. THE AIRCRAFT

Type and Model ES60 MkII "Boomerang" Glider	Registration VH-GPO	Certificate of Airworthiness	Valid from 9.12.66	Valid to 8.12.69
Registered Owner Waikerie Gliding Club Inc., P.O. Box 320, Waikerie S.A.	Operator Waikerie Gliding Club Inc., P.O. Box 320, Waikerie S.A.	Degree of damage to aircraft Destroyed	Other property damaged Nil	
Defects discovered				

3. THE FLIGHT

Last or intended departure point Waikerie Aerodrome	Time of departure 1335	Next point of intended landing Point of Departure	Purpose of flight Familiarization Flight	Class of operation Private
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THE CREW

Name	Status	Age	Class of licence	Hours on type	Total hours	Degree of injury
Donald Frederick JOHNSON	Pilot	39	Qualified to FAI "C" Certificate Standard	5 minutes	27 hours	Fatal

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

Name	Status	Degree of injury	Name	Status	Degree of injury

CONTRAVENTIONS OF REGULATIONS AND ORDERS


Regulation or Order No.	Nature of contravention

RELEVANT EVENTS

The pilot was making his first flight in an ES60 Glider but had previously flown the KA6 type glider which has similar characteristics. On the day of the accident he completed two dual check flights in a Blanik glider and was then given a comprehensive briefing on the ES60. Shortly after taking off in the ES60, the pilot assumed the normal low tow position behind the tug aircraft until reaching some 500 feet below the planned release height of 2,500 feet. At this point release occurred without the glider having taken up the normal line astern release position and subsequently a turn was made to the left, toward the aerodrome instead of to the right as is normal procedure. The glider then rapidly accelerated to a high speed in a very steep dive with the wings level and then recovered momentarily to level flight before entering a similar but steeper and faster dive. When the glider was below recovery height, the port wing separated from the fuselage which disintegrated on impact with the ground. No evidence was found of any structural defect or malfunction of the controls prior to the wing failure, nor were the weather conditions considered to be significant. The pilot had been adequately briefed on the use of dive brakes to limit the diving speed but the evidence is that they were not used. The pilot's medical history and a post-mortem examination provided no reason to suspect incapacitation.

8. OPINION AS TO CAUSE

The cause of the accident was that the pilot lost control of the aircraft but the reason for loss of control could not be established from the available evidence.

Report approved 	(D.S. GRAHAM)	Designation Assistant Director-General (Air Safety Investigation)	Date 11.2.70
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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".