



GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

Reference No.

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SUMMARY REPORT

AS/742/1053

Publication of this report is authorised by the Secretary under the provisions of Air Navigation Regulations 283 (1)

1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

● kilometres north-west of Griffith, New South Wales	Height a.m.s.l. 440 feet	Date 12.10.74	Time (Local) 1210 hours	Zone EST
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2. THE AIRCRAFT

Make and Model Vista Airtourer 115	Registration VH-MUM	Certificate of Airworthiness Valid from 11.1.74
Certificate of Registration issued to N. Crisp, "Yelta", Wilcannia, New South Wales.	Operator N. Crisp, "Yelta", Wilcannia, New South Wales.	Degree of damage to aircraft Destroyed Other property damaged Nil
Defects discovered A blanking plug, Part No. STD1211, was missing from its position in the forward end of the crankshaft and was not located.		

3. THE FLIGHT

Last or intended departure point ●	Time of departure 1135 hours	Next point of intended landing Wilcannia	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
Neville John CRISP	Pilot	42	Private	1530	2743	Nil

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

Name	Status	Degree of injury	Name	Status	Degree of injury
● tty Dorathea CRISP	Passenger	Minor			

6. RELEVANT EVENTS

On the day prior to the accident the aircraft was flown to Griffith by the pilot and was left with a maintenance organization for a 100 hourly inspection. The pilot has said that, on the following morning, the licensed aircraft maintenance engineer responsible for the inspection drew his attention to a slight oil leak from around the blanking plug at the forward end of the crankshaft and attempted to rectify the leak by using a hammer and punch. This has been denied by the engineer. The aircraft departed Griffith and climbed to a cruising altitude of 1000 to 1500 feet. After about 30 minutes a fine oil mist appeared on the windscreen and gradually ● eased until forward visibility became impaired. The pilot decided to return to Griffith and changed heading accordingly. Oil slicks were now appearing on the upper engine cowl and on the wings and forward vision became completely obscured. The pilot selected a large field below the aircraft and prepared to execute a precautionary landing. He obtained a limited amount of lateral vision by opening the canopy slightly. While the aircraft was banking, he was able to choose an approach path over pine trees but as soon as the wings were levelled he was unable to see ahead. He then became aware that the aircraft was on the point of stalling so lowered the nose and opened the throttle but the engine failed to respond. The left wing tip struck a tree branch and the aircraft landed heavily on the left main wheel and wing tip. The nosewheel entered rough ground and was torn off and the nose strut dug progressively into the ground causing the aircraft to nose over to an inverted position after which it slid 46 metres. After the aircraft came to rest the pilot, with some difficulty, released himself and dragged his passenger clear of the wreckage. Subsequent examination of the wreckage revealed that a blanking plug was missing from the forward end of the crankshaft and this had allowed the inflight oil loss. The engine was completely exhausted of oil and was approaching the point of seizure. The failure of the engine to respond to throttle movement during the latter part of the approach was probably the result of complete blockage of the air intake filter by oil.

7. OPINION AS TO CAUSE

The cause of the accident was an inflight total loss of engine oil resulting from a dislodged crankshaft blanking plug.

Approved for
publication(Frank E. Yeend)
Delegate of the Secretary

Date

10.6.1975