

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SUMMARY REPORT

AS/735/1025

Publication of this report is authorised by the Director-General of Civil Aviation under the provisions of Air Navigation Regulation 283(1)

1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

Lynwood Farm, 5 miles west of Busselton, W. A.	Height a.m.s.l. 12 feet	Date 1.12.73	Time (Local) 1450 hours	Zone WST
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2. THE AIRCRAFT

Make and Model Auster J5 Autocrat	Registration VH-KSV	Certificate of Airworthiness Valid from 24.9.65 to 23.9.74
Certificate of Registration issued to M. E. Armstrong, Lynwood Farm, Vasse, Western Australia.	Operator M. E. Armstrong, Lynwood Farm, Vasse, Western Australia.	Degree of damage to aircraft Destroyed
		Other property damaged Nil

Defects discovered

Fuel system heavily contaminated with dirt and insect bodies.

3. THE FLIGHT

Last or intended departure point Lynwood Farm	Time of departure 1435 hours	Next point of intended landing Point of departure	Purpose of flight Pleasure	Class of operation Private
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THE CREW

Name	Status	Age	Class of licence	Hours on type	Total hours	Degree of injury
Murray Edward ARMSTRONG	Pilot	35	Student	11 (Approx.)	36 (Approx.)	Fatal

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

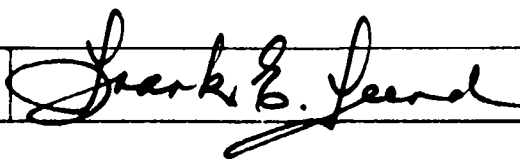
Name	Status	Degree of injury	Name	Status	Degree of injury
Alan Robert SHARP	Passenger	Fatal	Lindsay Kenneth ALBREY	Passenger	Fatal

6. RELEVANT EVENTS

Mr. Armstrong purchased the aircraft in June, 1972 and later that year, assisted by two other persons also not authorised to perform such work, modified and fitted to the aircraft a long range fuel tank of unknown history. This work was not recorded in the aircraft log book as is required. The aircraft subsequently underwent a major inspection followed by some 60 hours flying before again being delivered to the owner during September, 1973. Mr. Armstrong then flew the aircraft on various occasions totalling some 11 hours although, being the holder of a student pilot licence, he was not authorised to pilot any aircraft unless he was under the supervision of a flight instructor. He had not undertaken any formal training on the Auster aircraft and his licence was not endorsed with this type. The area from which the aircraft was flown was orientated north/south and, although some 1900 feet long, was crossed by a six inch irrigation pipe which restricted the available length of the northern section to 890 feet. The take-off chart indicated that 1830 feet was required to be available for a safe take-off. The aircraft was fitted with only two seats and, because of the requirement for all occupants to be provided with seats and safety belts, it was restricted to a pilot and only one passenger. Nevertheless, the pilot agreed to carry two passengers, one of whom sat on the floor in the rear compartment. The wind was southerly at about 20 knots and the aircraft made a take-off from the northern section of the strip into the south, followed by a right hand circuit and landing approach. When it had descended to about 10 feet it climbed again ahead to about 150 feet when a turn to the right commenced. The engine then commenced back-firing and emitting puffs of black smoke and the aircraft immediately turned left until it was on a northerly heading, losing height slowly to the east of the landing area. As it neared the northern end of the area a left turn was made and there was a substantial loss of height. As the wings were levelled at a height of about 20 feet control of the aircraft apparently was lost and it struck the ground in a nose down attitude. A fierce fire broke out immediately. Investigation revealed that the fuel filter was blocked with a mixture of solid contaminants which included sandy soil and insect bodies. Similar material was found in the long range fuel tank.

OPINION AS TO CAUSE

The cause of the accident was that the pilot was not adequately trained or experienced to cope with a power loss which probably occurred as a result of improper maintenance practices.

Approved for
publication

(FRANK E. YEEND)

Deputy of the Director-General of Civil Aviation

Date

2.8.1974

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".