

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
198302279**

**Beech A36 Bonanza**

**23 April 1983**

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**Occurrence Number:** 198302279                      **Occurrence Type:** Accident  
**Location:** Mt William, 43 km NW of Melbourne Airport VIC  
**Date:** 23 April 1983                      **Time:** 900  
**Highest Injury Level:** Fatal  
**Injuries:**

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	1	0	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	4	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Aircraft Details:** Beech A36 Bonanza  
**Registration:** VH-DAJ  
**Serial Number:**  
**Operation Type:** Travel  
**Damage Level:** Destroyed  
**Departure Point:** Moorabbin VIC  
**Departure Time:** 0900  
**Destination:** Sydney NSW

**Approved for Release:** 21st March, 1984

#### **Circumstances:**

The pilot and his four passengers had planned a trip to Sydney and return for the Anzac Day long weekend. In preparation for the trip the pilot obtained a flight check in a Beech Bonanza aircraft. On the morning of the accident the pilot obtained weather forecasts for the route to be flown, prepared a flight plan for the trip and submitted it to the Briefing Officer at Moorabbin Airport at 0755 hours. The flight plan indicated that the aircraft would proceed to the first nominated reporting point at Mangalore outside Melbourne Controlled Airspace and at an altitude below 5000 feet above mean sea level (amsl). When the pilot submitted the flight plan he was advised by the Briefing Officer that the route through the Kilmore Gap was not suitable for flight under visual meteorological conditions (VMC). The pilot agreed to delay his DEPARTURE until conditions improved in the Kilmore Gap. The pilot and passengers then proceeded to the aircraft and after loading, the aircraft was taxied for take-off. The DEPARTURE time from Moorabbin was reported by the pilot as 0900 hours. No request for any update of the weather situation in the Kilmore Gap area had been received from the pilot before DEPARTURE. Shortly after DEPARTURE the aircraft was identified on Melbourne radar after having inadvertently entered Melbourne Control Zone. The pilot was instructed to maintain the aircraft's present altitude and heading, until about four minutes later at 0908 hours when the pilot was cleared to resume his own navigation after reporting he had Yan Yean reservoir in sight. At about 0918 hours VH-DAJ was observed over Kilmore at an altitude of approximately 600 feet above ground level (agl), heading in a north-westerly direction. Shortly afterwards the pilot was asked by Melbourne Flight Service for his appreciation of the weather in the Kilmore Gap. In reply the pilot advised he was unsure of the aircraft's location and was going to carry out a 180 degree turn, he also requested the aircraft's bearing from Melbourne. The pilot was then advised that the aircraft was not within radar coverage and asked if the aircraft could be climbed to 4000 feet amsl and remain in VMC, to which the pilot replied that the aircraft was not in VMC at that time. The pilot was then advised that three minutes earlier his aircraft had been 30 nautical miles north of Melbourne and that if he turned to

the south the aircraft would be expected to come within radar coverage shortly. Two minutes later Melbourne Flight Service asked the pilot the direction and the altitude at which the aircraft was flying. The pilot answered that the heading was "one two zero" and then that the aircraft's level was "two thousand", this was the last transmission received from the aircraft. Weather in the area at the time was reported as low cloud and rain. The search for the aircraft was hampered by the weather. The wreckage was finally located by a motor bike rider later in the afternoon. The initial impact had been in a slight right wing low attitude on a heading of approximately 135 degrees at a height of 2180 feet amsl on the slopes of Mt William, the top of which is 2639 feet amsl. After the initial impact the aircraft had rolled inverted before striking the ground again, 70 metres beyond the initial point of impact. Fire broke out and engulfed the wreckage. The investigation did not reveal any fault with the aircraft that would have contributed to the accident. Witnesses in the area reported that the position VH-DAJ struck the ground was shrouded by cloud at the time of the accident.

**Significant Factors:**

1. The prevailing weather conditions, along the route flown by VH-DAJ were unsuitable for flight in Visual Meteorological Conditions, beyond the Kilmore Area.
2. The pilot was not qualified to conduct flight in other than Visual Meteorological Conditions.
3. The pilot continued flight into adverse weather conditions.
4. The pilot was inexperienced on aircraft with a relatively high cruising speed, such as VH-DAJ.