

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198902582**

De Havilland DH-60M Gipsy Moth

22 October 1989

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NOTE: All air safety occurrences reported to the ATSB are categorised and recorded. For a detailed explanation on Category definitions please refer to the ATSB website at www.atsb.gov.au.

Occurrence Number: 198902582

Occurrence Type: Accident

Location: Maitland Aerodrome NSW

Date: 22 October 1989

Time: 554

Highest Injury Level: Serious

Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	1	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	1	0	0
Total	0	2	0	0

Aircraft Details: De Havilland DH-60M
Gipsy Moth

Registration: VH-UQV

Serial Number: 783

Operation Type: Private

Damage Level: Substantial

Departure Point: Maitland NSW

Departure Time: 0535 approx.

Destination: Maitland NSW

Approved for Release: 29th November 1989

Circumstances:

An early morning flight was arranged between the owners of the Gipsy Moth VH-UQV and the owner of a Tiger Moth VH-DDA with the intention of photographing the Gipsy Moth from the air. The owner of VH-DDA agreed to fly in the Gipsy Moth and occupy the rear seat whilst the pilot-in-command occupied the front seat. The Tiger Moth was flown by the other owner of the Gipsy Moth. The Gipsy Moth was flown by the rear seat pilot for the first part of the flight. At the completion of the photography, which was conducted in the circuit area at Maitland, the pilot-in-command took control of the aircraft. The aircraft was flown to the north-east of the aerodrome to the Hunter River where it was descended to fly at a low height over the river. With the pilot in-command still at the controls, the aircraft returned to the aerodrome at a height of about 500 feet. After passing the aerodrome southern boundary, the aircraft entered a steep turn to the left. The non-flying pilot in the rear seat reported the aircraft, whilst passing through a north westerly heading, was rolled to the right to avoid a tree. The right wing struck and severed a cable of an 11,000 volt power line causing the aircraft to cartwheel into the ground, within the aerodrome boundary. This accident was not the subject of a formal on scene investigation.

Significant Factors:

The following factors were considered relevant to the development of the accident

1. The pilot in command inadvertently permitted the aircraft to enter a descent whilst attempting a steep turn at a low height.
2. The aircraft collided with power lines whilst the pilot was attempting to avoid a tree.

3. There was no operational reason for the pilot to attempt a manoeuvre at low level in the circuit.