

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198903849**

Thruster T500

8 October 1989

Readers are advised that the Australian Transport Safety Bureau investigates for the sole purpose of enhancing transport safety. Consequently, Bureau reports are confined to matters of safety significance and may be misleading if used for any other purposes.

Investigations commenced on or before 30 June 2003, including the publication of reports as a result of those investigations, are authorised by the CEO of the Bureau in accordance with Part 2A of the Air Navigation Act 1920.

Investigations commenced after 1 July 2003, including the publication of reports as a result of those investigations, are authorised by the CEO of the Bureau in accordance with the Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003 (TSI Act). Reports released under the TSI Act are not admissible as evidence in any civil or criminal proceedings.

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: 198903849 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: Duchess (70 km SE Mt Isa) QLD
Date: 8 October 1989 **Time:** 1202
Highest Injury Level: Nil
Injuries:

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

Aircraft Details: Thruster T500
Registration: AUF 25-0248
Serial Number: Not known
Operation Type: Sport Aviation
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: Duchess QLD
Departure Time: 1202
Destination: Mt Guide (35 km S Mt Isa)
QLD

Approved for Release: 17th October 1989

Circumstances:

The pilot reported that the takeoff was being conducted in a crosswind which he estimated was from the left at 10-15 knots. The surface of the 10 metre wide strip was covered in loose gravel. At the beginning of the takeoff roll, the aircraft began to weathercock to the left. The pilot continued, believing that directional control would improve as aircraft speed increased. However, this did not occur and the aircraft ground-looped, striking an embankment at the edge of the strip. The pilot reported that the aircraft was equipped with a small tailwheel which had limited effectiveness on the soft loose surface. Also, the aircraft was a late model Thruster aircraft which had a greater keel surface than earlier models because of its enclosed fuselage. This was the first time the pilot had operated the aircraft in crosswind conditions. The operating manual for the aircraft indicates a demonstrated crosswind capability of 15 knots. 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 had limited experience in the aircraft in crosswind conditions.
2. The strip surface limited the effectiveness of the tailwheel in maintaining directional control.
3. The crosswind was probably approaching the demonstrated limit for the aircraft.
4. The pilot did not abort the takeoff in sufficient time when the circumstances indicated the advisability of such action.