

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198903811**

Cessna 172-M

22 September 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: 198903811

Occurrence Type: Accident

Location: Maroochydore Aerodrome QLD

Date: 22 September 1989

Time: 0210 approx.

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: Cessna 172-M

Registration: VH-RQC

Serial Number: 172-61534

Operation Type: Not Applicable - Stolen Aircraft

Damage Level: Substantial

Departure Point: Caloundra Aerodrome QLD

Departure Time: N/K

Destination: Old Woman Island QLD

Approved for Release: 27th November 1989

Circumstances:

On the day before the accident, the pilot had obtained a short introductory flight in the aircraft which was later used. The instructor felt that he was above average in his handling of the aircraft. The pilot returned late at night, apparently broke into the flying school office to obtain keys, and took the aircraft. The aircraft was seen low flying along the Sunshine Coast over a period of several hours. The pilot later landed the aircraft on a taxiway without the use of aerodrome lighting. The only lights available were the normal Terminal illumination and security lights. The nose gear separated during the heavy landing. The Police later found a suicide note in the pilot's motel room, stating his intention to dive into Old Woman Island. The pilot had apparently been affected by alcohol. 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. Unqualified pilot.
2. Pilot under the influence of alcohol.
3. Hard landing on unlit landing area.