

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
198901570**

**Thruster TST**

**23 February 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](http://www.atsb.gov.au).**

This accident was not the subject of an on site investigation.

**Occurrence Number:** 198901570

**Occurrence Type:** Accident

**Location:** Freshwater Creek VIC

**Date:** 23 February 1989

**Time:** 1700

**Highest Injury Level:** Nil

**Injuries:**

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

**Aircraft Details:** Thruster TST

**Registration:** 25-0140 (AUF)

**Serial Number:** N/A

**Operation Type:** Sport Aviation

**Damage Level:** Substantial

**Departure Point:** Leopold VIC

**Departure Time:** 1615

**Destination:** Leopold VIC

**Approved for Release:** 21 June 1989

#### **Circumstances:**

The aircraft was approaching 500 feet above the ground in a climb when the pilot heard a sudden increase in engine noise and dark coloured dust spattered the windshield. He thought that the propeller must have failed and that the engine was overspeeding. He closed the throttle, turned off the ignition and entered a glide. The aircraft was landed straight ahead, into wind but onto downward sloping terrain. The slope was steeper than the pilot had anticipated, and he was forced to induce a ground loop in order to avoid a fence. During the ground loop the right main gear leg and the tail wheel assembly sustained damage. When the pilot subsequently inspected the aircraft he discovered that the muffler had partially detached from the exhaust pipe because a retaining spring had broken. The loud noise had been unmuffled engine noise and the dust on the windshield had emanated from the exhaust pipe.

#### **Significant Factors:**

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

1. The muffler detached from the exhaust pipe when an attachment spring failed.
2. The pilot mistook the loud, unmuffled, engine noise for a failed propeller.
3. The pilot shut down the engine without carrying out any trouble checks.
4. The aircraft was force landed downhill.