

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
198901567**

**Cessna 172N**

**23 November 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).**

**Occurrence Number:** 198901567  
**Location:** Essendon Airport VIC  
**Date:** 23 November 1989  
**Highest Injury Level:** Nil  
**Injuries:**

**Occurrence Type:** Accident  
**Time:** 957

	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:** Cessna 172N  
**Registration:** VH-RSB  
**Serial Number:** 17273719  
**Operation Type:** Private  
**Damage Level:** Substantial  
**Departure Point:** Essendon VIC  
**Departure Time:** 918  
**Destination:** Essendon VIC

**Approved for Release:** 23rd February 1990

#### **Circumstances:**

The aircraft was established in normal cruise flight when the pilot thought he could smell burning oil. A check of the engine instruments did not indicate any problem but he elected to return to Essendon. The Essendon Terminal Information Service recording advised runway 35 was in use wind from the north at 15-30 knots and a temperature of 28 degrees. The flying conditions were moderately turbulent and the pilot made the approach with 10 degrees of flap and at 75 knots. Observers in the Tower reported the aircraft touched down well into the runway heavily nosewheel first and bounced two or three times before coming to rest. Subsequent ground inspection of the aircraft revealed that the bolt attaching the upper portion of the nose gear leg to the aircraft had been sheared by straight overload forces. This had allowed the upper part of the nose leg to be forced into the engine bay under pressure. The engine firewall was also buckled.

#### **Significant Factors:**

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

1. Strong gusty wind conditions.
2. The pilot misjudged the landing flare and touchdown.
3. The pilot was possibly distracted by the perceived engine problem.