

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198900240**

Cessna 172N

19 July 1989

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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.

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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: 198900240
Location: 20 km north-east Booligal NSW
Date: 19 July 1989
Highest Injury Level: Fatal
Injuries:

Occurrence Type: Accident

Time: 1515

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

Aircraft Details: Cessna 172N
Registration: VH-EIH
Serial Number: 1727344
Operation Type: Private
Damage Level: Destroyed
Departure Point: Natue NSW
Departure Time: 1400
Destination: Natue NSW

Approved for Release: 5th June 1990

Circumstances:

The pilot of the Cessna was operating in conjunction with an agricultural aircraft. As the latter aircraft was making an approach to land, the Cessna pilot indicated that he would make an inspection of a nearby strip. The agricultural pilot observed the Cessna making a low pass over the second strip, with the wing flaps selected up. He lost sight of the Cessna as he concentrated on his own landing. The Cessna was subsequently found to have collided with the ground in a left hand turn with 45 degrees of bank, with almost no forward speed and a higher than normal rate of descent. The flaps were retracted and the engine was rotating at high rpm at the time of impact. The wreckage was located 50 metres to the left of the centreline and in line with the DEPARTURE end of the strip that the pilot was inspecting. The investigation did not disclose any defects with the aircraft that may have contributed to the accident. The investigation found that the aircraft was in a fully stalled condition at the time of collision with the ground. It appeared that the pilot made a low flapless inspection pass along the wet flight strip. At the end of the pass with full power he pulled up and entered a left hand turn. During the entry to the turn the aircraft stalled and there was insufficient height to complete a recovery. The factors which caused the pilot to lose control of the aircraft could not be positively determined. However, investigations of accidents that have occurred under similar circumstances, indicate that overconcentration on some aspect of the flight, eg. the flight strip inspection or distraction by something outside the aircraft can result in a pilot paying insufficient attention to the operation of the aircraft. This in turn can lead to a loss of control at low level, often with insufficient time and height available for the pilot to recover before the aircraft collides with the ground.

Significant Factors:

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

1. The pilot probably allowed his attention to be diverted from the operation of his aircraft.
2. The pilot did not maintain sufficient airspeed for safe flight.
3. There was insufficient height available to complete a recovery from a stalled condition.