

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199002035**

Cessna C152

21 December 1990

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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: 199002035

Occurrence Type: Accident

Location: 3 km East of Kerswell Point, Lake Burragorang NSW

Date: 21 December 1990

Time: 1657

Highest Injury Level: Fatal

Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	2	0	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	0
Total	2	0	0	0

Aircraft Details: Cessna C152

Registration: VH-BUO

Serial Number: 15283507

Operation Type: Aerial Work

Damage Level: Destroyed

Departure Point: Camden NSW

Departure Time: 1632

Destination: Camden NSW

Approved for Release: 24th December 1991

Circumstances:

The daily flying program authorised the instructor to fly with the student for a period of general flying revision in the training area. Prior to boarding VH-BUO the instructor discussed with the instructor from another Cessna aircraft, VH-HCE, his intention to proceed on a scenic flight to Lake Burragorang. The specific intention was to view an old telephone box located on an island of Kerswell Point. As the instructor from VH-HCE had not flown in this area it was agreed that both aircraft would proceed in company, with VH-BUO leading. Approaching Lake Burragorang, both instructors established radio communications on a VHF discrete frequency. When in the vicinity of the western extremity of the lake both aircraft descended and turned to take up a generally easterly track over the water. It was reported the aircraft levelled at a height of approximately 500 feet above water level. Approaching Kerswell Point from the west, VH-HCE gradually closed on VH-BUO. When the aircraft were about one kilometre east of Kerswell Point, VH-HCE passed to the right of VH-BUO with a lateral separation of 100 to 200 metres. The crew then lost sight of VH-BUO which appeared to be in a shallow climb and about 100 feet higher than VH-HCE. The instructor in VH-HCE attempted to call VH-BUO on the discrete frequency, but there was no response. There was no further contact with VH-BUO. Concerned by the sudden loss of contact, the instructor of VH-HCE turned back towards Kerswell Point. When there were no sighting of the Cessna and no radio contact, he set heading for Camden. However, about 10 kilometres from Camden, he again returned to the Kerswell Point area for another unsuccessful search. Upon returning to Camden the instructor reported that VH-BUO was overdue. A search was begun later in the afternoon but it was not until the following day that wreckage from the Cessna was found on the shoreline south of Kerswell Point. The aircraft was eventually located on the lake bed by sonar in 47 metres of water, approximately 3 kilometres east of Kerswell Point. The wreckage was subsequently recovered and an examination revealed the aircraft had collided with the water at a speed of about 100 knots, consistent with the aircraft being in a shallow descent and moderately banked to the left at the time of impact. No evidence was found

to indicate the aircraft was other than airworthy immediately prior to the accident. Weather conditions over Lake Burragorang at the time of the accident were reported to be fine and clear with an easterly breeze of 5 to 10 knots, and scattered cloud at 3500 feet. The events which occurred immediately before the collision with the water, were not positively determined. However, the circumstances of the accident are consistent with the aircraft being operated at a very low height. During the course of the investigation, evidence was obtained concerning the conduct of operations by the training organisation which reflected adversely upon the level of supervision. These matters were brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities for separate investigation.

Significant Factors:

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

1. Unauthorised low flying in an environment conducive to visual illusions.
2. Inadequate level of supervision exercised over the conduct of flying training operations.