

Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198802364

Cessna 188

7 May 1988

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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: 198802364 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: Wallaroi (5 km SE Goondiwindi) NSW
Date: 7 May 1988 **Time:** 1335 EST
Highest Injury Level: Serious
Injuries:

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

Aircraft Details: Cessna 188
Registration: VH-RBX
Serial Number: 188-0123
Operation Type: Aerial Work
Damage Level: Destroyed
Departure Point: Wallaroi NSW
Departure Time: 1315
Destination: Wallaroi NSW

Approved for Release: 31st August 1989

Circumstances:

The pilot was very experienced, having been an agricultural pilot for a considerable number of years. He had been aerial spraying a paddock for weed prevention with a herbicide, flying in a south to north direction, and passing under power lines which crossed the paddock from east to west. The aircraft was observed to strike the power lines with the tip of its fin, causing the empennage to separate from the fuselage. The aircraft then dived into the ground approximately 50 metres beyond the power lines, bounced back into the air and slid for another 47 metres with the engine, propeller and right hand fuel tank separating from the aircraft. The fuel tank exploded and set fire to the grass on the steep slope of a creek bed, next to where the aircraft came to rest. The pilot received minor injuries as a result of the impact, but was able to remove himself from the aircraft without help. He then slipped on the steep angled wing-walk and fell into the fire, receiving severe burns to the areas of arms and legs not covered by clothing. There was no medical evidence indicating that the pilot had been effected by the herbicide before the accident. This type of aircraft has been the subject of many wire strikes to the fin, as it is higher than the propeller arc in level flight, and pilots can misjudge its position. This occurrence was not the subject of an on-site investigation.

Significant Factors:

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

1. The pilot misjudged the height of the fin when flying under power lines.