

Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199102502

Cessna 177

03 January 1991

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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: 199102502
Location: Near Samsonvale QLD
Date: 03 January 1991
Highest Injury Level: Nil
Injuries:

Occurrence Type: Accident
Time: 1450

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	1	1
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	1
Total	0	0	0	2

Aircraft Details: Cessna 177
Registration: VH-DZK
Serial Number: 17700134
Operation Type: Private
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: Dubbo NSW
Departure Time: 1041
Destination: Redcliffe QLD

Approved for Release: 1st March 1991

Circumstances:

The pilot reported that he had refuelled at Dubbo enroute from Albury and departed Dubbo for Redcliffe with full tanks. Flight planned endurance was 300 minutes, the planned flight time was 210 minutes and the flight was to be conducted below 5000 feet. The pilot stated that during the flight he had encountered light to moderate turbulence and that frequent increases to the power setting had been made, to compensate for the effect of turbulence on aircraft performance. Passing Warwick, 160 kilometres from Redcliffe, the fuel gauges were reading one quarter and below one quarter, which was assessed by the pilot to be adequate to continue the flight. As the aircraft crossed the ranges to the west of Redcliffe, the turbulence became more severe and the pilot noticed the fuel gauge needles on or close to the empty stops, but expected that there would still be sufficient fuel remaining. Shortly after this, at 2000 feet, the fuel pressure dropped to zero and the engine failed. The pilot turned on the auxiliary fuel pump, selected a field and was about to land, when the engine restarted at about 100 feet above ground level. The pilot stated that he commenced a climb towards Redcliffe but passing 1500 feet the engine failed again. A forced landing was carried out onto a 500 metre long disused strip which was overgrown by tall grass. The pilot was forced to land downwind, and was unable to use the full length of the strip due to high trees on the approach end. During the landing roll, the aircraft ran off the end of the strip and down an embankment, before colliding with a dead tree and a fence cornerpost. Higher than normal power settings, stronger headwinds than planned for and turbulence contributed to fuel exhaustion after 260 minutes of flight. This accident was not the subject of an on-scene investigation.