Aviation Safety Investigation Report 198602364

Cessna 207

21 December 1986

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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: 198602364 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: Wilton NSW
Date: 21 December 1986 **Time:** 1530
Highest Injury Level: Nil
Injuries:

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

Aircraft Details: Cessna 207
Registration: VH-UBX
Serial Number:
Operation Type: Miscellaneous (Parachute Operations)
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: Wilton NSW
Departure Time: 1510 approx
Destination: Wilton NSW

Approved for Release: April 28th 1987

Circumstances:

A student parachutist was exiting the aircraft for a static line jump, when a portion of the main canopy became entangled around the right horizontal stabiliser. Approximately half the right elevator was torn away, together with a portion of the trim tab, while the outer section of the stabiliser was bent downwards through 45 degrees. The parachutist landed safely, and the jump instructor then made a normal descent. The pilot was able to retain control of the aircraft, and elected to divert to a more suitable aerodrome, where an uneventful landing was subsequently carried out. The parachutists were using a static line bag deployment system. This system does not require a pilot parachute to extract the main canopy from its container, but the airspeed and attitude of the aircraft are critical to ensure safe operations. On this occasion, it was probable that the airspeed was higher than desirable at the time the parachutist exited the aircraft. However, the parachute school had not provided specific operating instructions for pilots engaged in this particular form of parachute dropping. In addition, it was considered that the static line attachment point was in a less than optimum position inside the aircraft, in that it reduced the available vertical distance between the attachment and the tailplane. It was also possible that the parachute may have been incorrectly packed, leading to earlier than normal deployment.