Aviation Safety Investigation Report 198702407

Bede BD 4

7 June 1987

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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: 198702407 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: 1 km SE Hoxton Park NSW
Date: 7 June 1987 **Time:** 1644 approx
Highest Injury Level: Serious
Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	1	2	0
Total	**0**	**1**	**3**	**0**

Aircraft Details: Bede BD 4
Registration: VH-ECW
Serial Number:
Operation Type: Private (Pleasure)
Damage Level: Destroyed
Departure Point: Hoxton Park NSW
Departure Time: 1644 approx
Destination: Hoxton Park NSW

Approved for Release: 23 February 1988

Circumstances:

At a height of about 350 feet after a normal takeoff, the engine commenced to run roughly. The pilot considered that the problem may have been caused by part of a propeller blade becoming detached. Power was reduced and the pilot commenced to turn back towards the aerodrome. A substantial amount of height was lost during this turn, and the aircraft was seen to make a number of lateral oscillations. It then struck the ground in a tail low, wings level attitude at relatively low forward speed. No pre-impact mechanical defect was found with the engine or propeller. However, initial examination of the wreckage revealed that the fuel selector valve was very close to the "Off" position. Tests conducted on a similar aircraft indicated that with the fuel selector positioned as found, sufficient fuel was available to allow engine operation at low to moderate power settings. It was considered likely that on this occasion the fuel flow required for take-off exceeded the amount available through the selector valve. This in turn led to an excessively lean mixture, and the engine lost power. The aircraft had stalled during the attempted turn back towards the aerodrome, and the pilot had insufficient height in which to effect a recovery.