

Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199003060

Airtractor AT301

24 April 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: 199003060
Location: 30 km S Boggabilla NSW
Date: 24 April 1990
Highest Injury Level: Nil
Injuries:

Occurrence Type: Accident
Time: 1730

	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: Airtractor AT301
Registration: VH-AWK
Serial Number: 301-0382
Operation Type: Aerial Work
Damage Level: Destroyed
Departure Point: Agricultural Airstrip 30 km
 S Boggabilla NSW
Departure Time: N/A
Destination: Agricultural Airstrip 30 km
 S Boggabilla NSW

Approved for Release: 8th May 1991

Circumstances:

The pilot had been airborne for approximately 15 minutes, carrying out aerial spraying of a newly planted crop. The paddock being sprayed was bounded on its northern and western boundaries by a fence approximately 1.2 metres high. Directly above, and running parallel with the western fence, was a three strand power line, the lower cables of which were approximately five metres above ground level. The pilot had flown above the power lines on each previous spray run, crossing the paddock from east to west. After completing a procedure turn the aircraft was lined up for the clean-up run from west to east. The pilot stated that he forgot about the power lines until they became visual again at close range. Knowing he would not be able to climb the aircraft above the cables in the distance remaining, the pilot elected to fly between the lines and the fence. The aircraft struck the two lower cables of the power lines, tearing the fin and rudder from the airframe. The aircraft continued airborne for approximately one kilometre before rolling to the right and striking the ground. It then began to break up as it cartwheeled across the paddock, finally coming to rest inverted. An inspection of the area revealed that the poles that supported the power lines would have been difficult to see, when approaching from the west, as their outline merged with trees in the paddock.

Significant Factors:

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

- 1 The pilot forgot about the presence of the power lines.
- 2 The pilot did not see the power lines in time to avoid them.

3 The aircraft wire deflector failed on contact with the power lines.