

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
198903832**

**Maxair Drifter**

**17 April 1989**

Readers are advised that the Australian Transport Safety Bureau investigates for the sole purpose of enhancing transport safety. Consequently, Bureau reports are confined to matters of safety significance and may be misleading if used for any other purposes.

Investigations commenced on or before 30 June 2003, including the publication of reports as a result of those investigations, are authorised by the CEO of the Bureau in accordance with Part 2A of the Air Navigation Act 1920.

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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](http://www.atsb.gov.au).**

This accident was not formally investigated by the Bureau. The relevant details were supplied by the pilot.

**Occurrence Number:** 198903832      **Occurrence Type:** Accident  
**Location:** 70 km SSE of Quilpie QLD  
**Date:** 17 April 1989      **Time:** 1130  
**Highest Injury Level:** Nil  
**Injuries:**

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	1	1
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

**Aircraft Details:** Maxair Drifter  
**Registration:** N/A  
**Serial Number:**  
**Operation Type:** Sport Aviation  
**Damage Level:** Substantial  
**Departure Point:** Beechal Station (63 km SSE  
Quilpie) QLD  
**Departure Time:** 1115 approx  
**Destination:** Wareo Station (74 km SSE  
Quilpie) QLD

**Approved for Release:** 2 May 1989

**Circumstances:**

The pilot reported that while cruising at about 350 feet above ground level, the engine began to run roughly to the extent that he was unable to maintain height. In the subsequent landing, the aircraft struck a tree, cartwheeled, and was extensively damaged. The spark plug in one of the engine's two cylinders was fouled by carbon deposits.

**Significant Factors:**

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

1. A fouled spark plug caused the engine to run roughly.
2. The remaining engine power available was insufficient to maintain level flight.
3. The pilot was forced to land the aircraft on unsuitable terrain.