

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198903834**

Maxair Drifter

25 April 1989

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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.

This occurrence was not the subject of an on-site investigation and the above information was supplied the pilot.

Occurrence Number: 198903834 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: Neumayer Valley (120 km SE Burketown) QLD
Date: 25 April 1989 **Time:** 1300
Highest Injury Level: Minor
Injuries:

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

Aircraft Details: Maxair Drifter
Registration: N/A
Serial Number: N/A
Operation Type: Private
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: Neumayer Valley QLD
Departure Time: N/K
Destination: Neumayer Valley QLD

Approved for Release: 3rd July 1989

Circumstances:

The pilot reported that he was flying at about 100 feet above ground level when the engine failed suddenly and completely over thick scrub. He decided to stall the aircraft into the foliage canopy, but the aircraft did not make contact with the main canopy other than small branches, and impacted the ground at a 60 degree nose down attitude from a height of about 40 to 50 feet. The nose section, undercarriage and fuel tank were totally destroyed on impact. Examination of the engine has not revealed any mechanical defect. The pilot believes he may have inadvertently bumped the "engine kill switch" to the off position with his knee. The Bureau has been advised by the Australian Ultralight Federation that this particular switch has since been fitted with a shroud to prevent inadvertent operation.

Significant Factors:

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

1. Engine failure at low altitude probably caused by the pilot inadvertently bumping the ignition kill switch to the off position.
2. Terrain unsuitable for a forced landing.