

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199804232**

**Air Tractor Inc
AT-301**

09 October 1998

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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: 199804232 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: 10km SE Crystal Brook, (ALA)
State: SA **Inv Category:** 4
Date: Friday 09 October 1998
Time: 1812 hours **Time Zone** CST
Highest Injury Level: Serious
Injuries:

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

Aircraft Manufacturer: Air Tractor Inc
Aircraft Model: AT-301
Aircraft Registration: VH-FAQ **Serial Number:** 301-0209
Type of Operation: Commercial Aerial Agriculture - Other
Damage to Aircraft: Destroyed
Departure Point: Calvin Grove SA
Departure Time: 0730 CST
Destination: Gladstone SA

Crew Details:

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on Type	Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	Commercial	1100.0	1500

Approved for Release: Tuesday, November 24, 1998

While conducting spraying operations, the aircraft hit a single wire earth return (SWER) power line. The power line contacted the propeller and proceeded to wrap about the propeller hub. The power line was pulled taut by the aircraft, the pilot lost control, and the aircraft impacted the ground 1,000 metres beyond the point of wire contact. The lateness of the day combined with low overcast is believed to have contributed to the pilot's inability to detect the wire in his flightpath.

During the impact sequence, the underfloor framework with the attachment points for the seat and seat belt appear to have distorted altering their geometry. This in turn may have allowed sufficient movement of the pilot against the loosened restraints for his head to contact with the instrument panel. As he was wearing a helmet at the time, the sequence resulted in severe concussion and not a more serious head trauma.