

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199701554**

**Maule Aircraft Corp
Lunar Rocket**

15 February 1997

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 Executive Director 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.

The Bureau did not conduct an on scene investigation of this occurrence. The information presented below was obtained from information supplied to the Bureau.

Occurrence Number: 199701554 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: Sunburnt Plains 18KM W Dalby
State: QLD **Inv Category:** 4
Date: Saturday 15 February 1997
Time: 1600 hours **Time Zone** EST
Highest Injury Level: Minor
Injuries:

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

Aircraft Manufacturer: Maule Aircraft Corp
Aircraft Model: M-5-235C
Aircraft Registration: VH-MAS **Serial Number:** 7174C
Type of Operation: Non-commercial Practice
Damage to Aircraft: Substantial
Departure Point: Sunburnt Plains
Departure Time: 1600 EST
Destination: Sunburnt Plains

Crew Details:

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on	
		Type	Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	Private	249.0	360

Approved for Release: Friday, May 30, 1997

The pilot reported his aircraft had been hangared since April 1994. He had become seriously ill in November 1994 but, in the past 12 months, he had made a good recovery. He decided that he would go with a friend, who was a qualified pilot, to pick up his aircraft from Roma where it was hangared. The aircraft was flown from Roma to his friend's property.

On the afternoon of the accident, the pilot was using a 220 m runway for takeoff but this distance was well within the performance capability of the aircraft. The friction nut for the throttle control in the aircraft was not functioning correctly, and it was possible for the throttle control to slide back from the full throttle position by about 2.5cm, if the throttle was not held in position manually.

The pilot stated that after becoming airborne in about 70 m he went to apply full flap after building up some speed to clear some low trees at the end of the runway. He said that as he let go of the throttle to apply extra flap, the throttle control slid back with a corresponding reduction in engine power. By the time he realised what had happened and reapplied full throttle, it was evident that the aircraft would not clear trees at the end of the strip. He said he was then left with no alternative but to pull the nose up and 'belly' the aircraft through the trees.

