

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
199703960**

**Beech Aircraft Corp  
Duchess**

**05 December 1997**

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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).**

**Occurrence Number:** 199703960      **Occurrence Type:** Accident  
**Location:** Galston  
**State:** NSW      **Inv Category:** 4  
**Date:** Friday 05 December 1997  
**Time:** 1750 hours      **Time Zone:** ESuT  
**Highest Injury Level:** Minor  
**Injuries:**

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	Total
Crew	0	0	1	1	2
Ground	0	0	0	0	0
Passenger	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

**Aircraft Manufacturer:** Beech Aircraft Corp  
**Aircraft Model:** 76  
**Aircraft Registration:** VH-HJS      **Serial Number:** ME-116  
**Type of Operation:** Instructional Dual  
**Damage to Aircraft:** Substantial  
**Departure Point:** Maitland NSW  
**Departure Time:**  
**Destination:** Bankstown NSW

**Crew Details:**

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on	
		Type	Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	ATPL	683.0	3300
Other Pilot	Commercial	55.0	230

**Approved for Release:** Wednesday, December 24, 1997

During an IFR pre-licence test the pilot of a Beech 76 aircraft, enroute from Maitland to Bankstown, made a MAYDAY call advising that both engines had failed. No location was given and the pilot did not respond to calls from Flight Service. A distress phase was declared and the appropriate authorities notified. A short time later a telephone call was received from the operator, advising that the aircraft had made a forced landing on the Galston sports oval. Both occupants were uninjured, although the aircraft was substantially damaged. Emergency services were in attendance. The distress phase was then cancelled.

The aircraft had touched down on a small sporting oval, but the pilot was unable to stop within the confines of the field. The aircraft struck the top of an embankment, where the left wingtip collided with a power pole, and the right main landing gear was torn off. The aircraft then collided with a chain mesh fence, coming to rest in a right wing low attitude.

The pilot subsequently reported that about ten minutes prior the event, whilst at 6,000 ft, the left engine had surged and stopped. The propeller was feathered and the fuel crossfeed was selected to the right tank. The engine was restarted and developed normal power. The aircraft was then descended to 1,500 ft, but shortly after, both engines began to surge, causing the aircraft to yaw violently. A MAYDAY call was transmitted but there was insufficient time to report position before the forced landing.

The investigation determined that only an unusable quantity of fuel remained on board the aircraft after the accident. Although both left and right fuel tanks had been holed during the accident sequence, testing determined that both tanks were capable of retaining substantial quantities of fuel whilst the aircraft remained in the right wing low attitude at the accident site.

An examination of fuel records determined that the aircraft had not been refueled on the day of the accident. Calculations using the previous recorded flying times, and fuel uplifts on the day prior to the accident, determined there had been insufficient fuel on board, prior to takeoff, to complete the flight.

