

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
199704108**

**de Havilland Canada  
Beaver**

**16 December 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.

Investigations commenced after 1 July 2003, including the publication of reports as a result of those investigations, are authorised by the Executive Director of the Bureau in accordance with the Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003 (TSI Act). Reports released under the TSI Act are not admissible as evidence in any civil or criminal proceedings.

**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:** 199704108      **Occurrence Type:** Accident  
**Location:** 37km S Walcha, (ALA)  
**State:** NSW      **Inv Category:** 4  
**Date:** Tuesday 16 December 1997  
**Time:** 1330 hours      **Time Zone** ESuT  
**Highest Injury Level:** None

**Aircraft Manufacturer:** de Havilland Canada  
**Aircraft Model:** DHC-2  
**Aircraft Registration:** VH-AAJ      **Serial Number:** 1066  
**Type of Operation:** Commercial    Aerial Agriculture - Other  
**Damage to Aircraft:** Destroyed  
**Departure Point:** 'Glen Collen', NSW  
**Departure Time:** 1530 ESuT  
**Destination:** 'Glen Collen', NSW

**Crew Details:**

| Role             | Class of Licence | Hours on |             |
|------------------|------------------|----------|-------------|
|                  |                  | Type     | Hours Total |
| Pilot-In-Command | Commercial       | 500.0    | 3000        |

**Approved for Release:** Saturday, July 11, 1998

The pilot was conducting topdressing operations from a property airstrip located in undulating terrain. He reported that he had refuelled the aircraft after 11 flights, and that the accident occurred on the seventh takeoff after refuelling. The aircraft appeared to be operating normally, but failed to gain flying speed before reaching the end of the strip.

During the subsequent collision with the terrain, both wings, both elevators, the engine, and the main landing gear were torn from the aircraft. The aircraft came to rest facing back towards the airstrip, about 200 m beyond and 100 ft below the level of the airstrip.

The pilot stated that he had observed indications of localised whirlwinds and considered it likely that as he attempted to lift the aircraft from the strip, the aircraft's performance had been adversely affected by one.

Weather conditions at the time were fine with a north-westerly wind of 6 to 10 kts.

