

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199400499**

**Cessna Aircraft Company
Skyhawk**

28 February 1994

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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: 199400499 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: Bonrook Station
State: NT **Inv Category:** 4
Date: Monday 28 February 1994
Time: 0930 hours **Time Zone** CST
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	1	1
Total	0	0	1	1	2

Aircraft Manufacturer: Cessna Aircraft Company
Aircraft Model: 172P
Aircraft Registration: VH-FCQ **Serial Number:** 17274973
Type of Operation: Non-commercial Pleasure/Travel
Damage to Aircraft: Destroyed
Departure Point: Bonrook Station NT
Departure Time: 0930 CST
Destination: Darwin NT

Crew Details:

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on Type	Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	Private		149

Approved for Release: Sunday, June 19, 1994

While enroute from Batchelor to Tindal, the pilot encountered deteriorating weather conditions and landed the aircraft in a suitable paddock, on Bonrook Station. The following day he inspected the landing area and judged the length to be 500 metres and that the area was suitable for takeoff. However, the weather conditions were still unsuitable for departure.

The next day, after obtaining a weather forecast and being satisfied that the weather was suitable, the pilot decided to continue the flight. He and his passenger boarded the aircraft and the pilot configured the aircraft for a short-field takeoff. During the subsequent takeoff the pilot rotated the aircraft at 55 kts. It became airborne and commenced to climb clear of the 10 metre high trees at the end of the strip. However, the pilot became concerned about a tall tree directly ahead and commenced a left turn to avoid the tree. The stall warning sounded, one wing dropped and the aircraft impacted the trees. The pilot suffered minor lacerations to his head, probably as a result of being struck by sections of the broken windscreen, and the passenger received minor bruising.

Checks of the fuel did not reveal any contamination and the pilot believes that the engine was operating normally during the takeoff.

An inspection of the takeoff area revealed that the surface was firm and that the grass had recently been slashed.

The performance charts contained in the flight manual show that the strip distance available was adequate for a takeoff from a dry grass runway. However, on this occasion, it is likely that the surface was wet and covered in recently slashed grass and that takeoff performance was degraded. The pilot was not familiar with operation from such strips.
