

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199401893**

**Kavanagh Balloons Pty Ltd
D-105
Kavanagh Balloons Pty Ltd
E-210**

15 July 1994

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.

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: 199401893 **Occurrence Type:** Incident
Location: Gilston Oval, 25km NW Coolangatta
State: QLD **Inv Category:** 4
Date: Friday 15 July 1994
Time: 0715 hours **Time Zone** EST
Highest Injury Level: None

Aircraft Manufacturer: Kavanagh Balloons Pty Ltd
Aircraft Model: E-210
Aircraft Registration: VH-AJB **Serial Number:** KB115
Type of Operation: Charter Passenger
Damage to Aircraft: Minor
Departure Point: Gilston Oval QLD
Departure Time: 0715 EST
Destination:

Crew Details:

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on Type Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	Commercial	1100

Aircraft Manufacturer: Kavanagh Balloons Pty Ltd
Aircraft Model: D-105
Aircraft Registration: VH-HJA **Serial Number:** KB-025
Type of Operation: Non-commercial Pleasure/Travel
Damage to Aircraft: Nil
Departure Point: Gilston Oval QLD
Departure Time: 0715 EST
Destination:

Crew Details:

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on Type Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	None	20

Approved for Release: Tuesday, August 23, 1994

Both balloons were departing from the same area and commenced inflating their envelopes at about the same time. VH-HJA, the smaller balloon, was ready for launch first and after takeoff initially drifted in a south-westerly direction before reversing direction and drifting back towards the takeoff point, at about 200 feet above ground level.

At about this time VH-AJB was ready for launch, and after takeoff it began to drift to the south-west toward the approaching VH-HJA. The pilot of VH-AJB signalled to the other pilot to climb. Despite the pilot of the smaller balloon operating the burners, the envelope of VH-AJB collided with the basket of VH-HJA. The basket was tilted to an acute angle but all the occupants managed to maintain hold and remained in the basket. The envelope of VH-AJB became snagged on the basket but was released by a passenger in VH-HJA. Both balloons then separated and continued their respective flights without further incident.

In general, the procedures governing ballooning require that the higher balloon give way to the lower balloon. However, it is also a requirement that aircraft (including balloons) on the ground give way to those that are airborne.

In this case, it would have been prudent for the pilot of VH-AJB to have delayed his takeoff until the other balloon was well clear. Equally, the pilot of VH-HJA should have climbed his balloon when he saw that it was drifting back towards the departure point where the other balloon was preparing for takeoff.

