



Australian Government

Australian Transport Safety Bureau

Collision on the ground involving a Cessna 172R, VH-IMS

Sunshine Coast Airport, Queensland, 2 August 2013

ATSB Transport Safety Report
Aviation Occurrence Investigation
AO-2013-128
Final – 31 October 2013

Released in accordance with section 25 of the *Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003*

Publishing information

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Addendum

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Collision on the ground involving a Cessna 172R, VH-IMS

What happened

On 2 August 2013, at about 1400 Eastern Standard Time,¹ the student pilot of a Cessna 172R aircraft, registered VH-IMS (IMS), conducted a solo navigation flight from Archerfield to Sunshine Coast via Caboolture, Queensland. After landing at Sunshine Coast Airport, the pilot taxied the aircraft to the general aviation apron.

Other aircraft were operating in the area and the pilot wanted to ensure he remained clear of them. The pilot noted a fence and power pole on his left, and then focused on an aircraft taxiing in front of IMS. While the pilot was watching the other aircraft taxiing, he advised that IMS may have rolled forward unnoticed. When the pilot commenced a right turn, the aircraft was past the end of the fence and as he turned the aircraft, the left wing collided with a power pole.

Figure 1: Aircraft wing damage and power pole



Source: Operator

Safety message

The pilot reported that he had learnt a valuable lesson from the accident, in that the flight is not over until the aircraft has been shut down and secured. In particular, this incident highlights the need to keep a good look out during taxi as well as in flight.

There are many visual illusions that can lead to incidents in aviation. In this accident, the pilot was watching an aircraft taxiing away from him. He thought that his aircraft was stationary, and was unaware that it had rolled forwards because of the perception of movement relative to the other aircraft. The aviation medicine website, www.avmed.in/2011/04/spatial-disorientation-visual-illusions/, provides additional examples of visual illusions common in aviation.

¹ Eastern Standard Time (EST) was Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) + 10 hours.

General details

Occurrence details

Date and time:	2 August 2013 – 1400 EST	
Occurrence category:	Accident	
Primary occurrence type:	Collision on the ground	
Location:	Sunshine Coast Airport, Queensland	
	Latitude: 26° 36.20' S	Longitude: 153° 05.47' E

Aircraft details

Manufacturer and model:	Cessna Aircraft Company 172R	
Registration:	VH-IMS	
Serial number:	17280271	
Type of operation:	Flying training - solo	
Persons on board:	Crew – 1	Passengers – Nil
Injuries:	Crew – Nil	Passengers – Nil
Damage:	Substantial	

About the ATSB

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) is an independent Commonwealth Government statutory agency. The Bureau is governed by a Commission and is entirely separate from transport regulators, policy makers and service providers. The ATSB's function is to improve safety and public confidence in the aviation, marine and rail modes of transport through excellence in: independent investigation of transport accidents and other safety occurrences; safety data recording, analysis and research; and fostering safety awareness, knowledge and action.

The ATSB is responsible for investigating accidents and other transport safety matters involving civil aviation, marine and rail operations in Australia that fall within Commonwealth jurisdiction, as well as participating in overseas investigations involving Australian registered aircraft and ships. A primary concern is the safety of commercial transport, with particular regard to fare-paying passenger operations.

The ATSB performs its functions in accordance with the provisions of the *Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003* and Regulations and, where applicable, relevant international agreements.

The object of a safety investigation is to identify and reduce safety-related risk. ATSB investigations determine and communicate the safety factors related to the transport safety matter being investigated.

It is not a function of the ATSB to apportion blame or determine liability. At the same time, an investigation report must include factual material of sufficient weight to support the analysis and findings. At all times the ATSB endeavours to balance the use of material that could imply adverse comment with the need to properly explain what happened, and why, in a fair and unbiased manner.

About this report

Decisions regarding whether to conduct an investigation, and the scope of an investigation, are based on many factors, including the level of safety benefit likely to be obtained from an investigation. For this occurrence, a limited-scope, fact-gathering investigation was conducted in order to produce a short summary report, and allow for greater industry awareness of potential safety issues and possible safety actions.