

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198903804**

**Aero Engine Service Ltd Air Tourer
Super 150**

3 September 1989

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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.

Occurrence Number: 198903804
Location: Grafton NSW
Date: 3 September 1989
Highest Injury Level: Fatal
Injuries:

Occurrence Type: Accident

Time: 1630

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	1	0	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	0
Total	1	0	0	0

Aircraft Details: Aero Engine Service Ltd
 Air Tourer Super 150
Registration: VH-AHW
Serial Number: A543
Operation Type: Private
Damage Level: Destroyed
Departure Point: South Grafton Airstrip NSW
Departure Time: 1615
Destination: South Grafton Airstrip NSW

Approved for Release: 24th April 1990

Circumstances:

The pilot had been in the habit of flying about twice per month for a number of years. Each flight was about 30 minutes long and usually involved aerobatic flying. On this occasion the aircraft was observed conducting loops and a barrel roll in the normal area above 3000 feet above sea level. The aircraft later joined the circuit for a landing. While on the crosswind leg the aircraft continued to descend until, at about 700 feet above ground level, the aircraft entered a gentle left turn. The nose dropped during the turn until the aircraft was descending at an angle of about 45°. When the aircraft was about 100 feet above the river the angle increased to about 85° nose down. No changes in engine power were heard during this time. The aircraft struck the Clarence River about 40 metres from the shore at an estimated speed of 180 knots. No evidence of pre-existing defects in the control circuits was found, however, the wings had been torn off on impact and large sections of the control circuits were not recovered. Witnesses reported that nothing was observed to fall off the aircraft and no part of the aircraft was flapping during the descent. Pathological examination concluded that the pilot had died as a result of myocardial ischaemia (lack of blood supply to the heart). The pilot had been hospitalised some years earlier due to a heart attack. This had not been reported to the medical examiner during subsequent licence medical examinations. Hence, as the required tests had not been conducted during licence renewal, it was not possible to determine whether the pilot may have been able to hold a licence at the time of the accident.

Significant Factors:

The following factors were considered relevant to the development of the accident

1. Pilot did not report his medical history accurately.

2. Pilot suffered from coronary artery disease.

3. Pilot died during flight.