



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SUMMARY REPORT

Reference No.

SI/801/1011

Publication of this report is authorized by the Secretary under the provisions of Air Navigation Regulations 283 (1)

1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

Dysart, Queensland	Height a.m.s.l. 700 feet	Date 28.2.80	Time (Local) 1025 hours	Zone EST
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2. THE AIRCRAFT

Make and Model Cessna 421B	Registration VH-EGT	Certificate of Airworthiness Valid from 16.9.76
Certificate of Registration issued to	Operator	Degree of damage to aircraft Destroyed
		Other property damaged Post and wire fencing.
Defects discovered Nil		

3. THE FLIGHT

Last or intended departure point Dysart	Time of departure -	Next point of intended landing Moranbah	Purpose of flight Carriage of Passenger	Class of operation Charter
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4. THE CREW

Name	Status	Age	Class of licence	Hours on type	Total hours	Degree of injury
	Pilot	27	Commercial	75	4672	Fatal

5. OTHER PERSONS (All passengers and persons injured on ground)

Name	Status	Degree of injury	Name	Status	Degree of injury
	Passenger	Serious			

6. RELEVANT EVENTS

The aircraft and the pilot had remained overnight at Dysart and, prior to the intended departure time of 1030 hours, the pilot telephoned the Rockhampton Briefing Office, obtained the relevant meteorological forecasts, and submitted details of his flight plan. After he carried out a daily inspection of the aircraft, baggage was loaded into the nose baggage compartment and the pilot and passenger boarded the aircraft. Other aircraft were also being prepared for departure at this time.

The airstrip at Dysart was 924 metres in length and aligned southeast/northwest. It had a surface of grassed dry sandy loam with a hard gravel centre section. The aircraft parking area was to the east of the southeast end of the strip. The weather was fine and hot and the surface wind was light and variable. The airstrip was suitable and adequate in length for a take-off by VH-EGT in the circumstances existing at the time of the accident.

After starting the engines, the pilot taxied the aircraft along the centre section of the strip towards the northwest end preparatory to taking off towards the southeast. As the aircraft neared the northwest end of the strip, the pilot turned it left on to the grassed loam and then commenced a right turn, with the intention of lining up on the centre section for take-off. During the right turn, all three wheels partially sank into a soft, lightly grassed area and the aircraft came to a halt.

The pilot applied substantial engine power, but the aircraft did not move. Both engines were left idling and the two occupants left the aircraft. After the pilot removed soil from the front of the nosewheel, he boarded the aircraft again, applied substantial power to both engines, and the aircraft moved forward and lined up on the centre section of the strip. The pilot left his seat and opened the rear cabin door for the passenger to re-board the aircraft. He then secured the door and returned to his seat. The passenger occupied the seat adjacent to the pilot.

6. RELEVANT EVENTS (Cont'd)

Engine power was applied and the take-off commenced. Initially, the aircraft turned fairly sharply to the left but the pilot straightened it and it remained on the centre section of the strip during the take-off run. The engines appeared to develop normal take-off power, but the rate of acceleration was considerably less than would normally be expected for an aircraft of this type. As it approached the end of the strip, and was still on the ground, the pilot rotated the aircraft into a marked nose-up attitude. It became airborne some 18 metres before the end of the strip but did not climb away. The main landing gear struck the boundary fence situated some 40 metres beyond the end of the strip and, about this time, the pilot closed both engine throttles. The aircraft struck another fence, ran across the road, struck a third fence and rolled down a gully. During this time the left wing was damaged, a fuel cell was ruptured and the fuel ignited, and the main landing gear was torn off. The main wreckage came to rest on the upslope of the gully some 233 metres beyond the end of the strip and fire rapidly developed.

Both occupants were seriously injured and the passenger made unsuccessful attempts to extricate the pilot from the burning aircraft. The passenger was unable to open the emergency exit on the right side of the cabin but was able to open the main cabin door on the left side and leave the aircraft at this point. Bystanders were quickly at the scene and unsuccessfully attempted to control the fire with portable extinguishers. Attempts to enter the aircraft to assist the pilot were frustrated by intense heat.

Detailed examination of the wreckage revealed no evidence of any defect or malfunction which may have contributed to the accident. It was, however, established that the parking brake selector was in the 'PARK' position, the parking brake control valve was in the 'ON' position, and the condition of the wheel brake units was consistent with an overheat situation arising from sustained partial brake application while the wheels were turning. The performance of the aircraft and the marks of its wheels on the strip were consistent with continuous partial brake application throughout the take-off run.

7. OPINION AS TO CAUSE

The cause of the accident was that, probably because of distraction arising from the temporary bogging of the aircraft, the pre-take-off cockpit procedures adopted by the pilot were inadequate.

Approved for
publication



(G. V. Hughes)
Delegate of the Secretary

Date

17.12.1981