

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198600131**

Aero Commander 500S

27 February 1986

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 CEO 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 CEO 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.

Occurrence Number: 198600131
Location: 2km North of Canning Dam WA
Date: 27 February 1986
Highest Injury Level: Fatal
Injuries:

Occurrence Type: Accident
Time: 807

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	2	1	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	0
Total	2	1	0	0

Aircraft Details: Aero Commander 500S
Registration:
Serial Number: 3263
Operation Type: Private-Test of Airborne
Survey Equipment
Damage Level: Destroyed
Departure Point: Jandakot WA
Departure Time: 0807
Destination: Jandakot WA

Approved for Release: November 16th 1987

Circumstances:

The flight was planned to check the onboard survey equipment. After departing Jandakot the aircraft operated to the south of the airfield for about 80 minutes before the pilot advised that he would be extending his operation to the east over the Darling Ranges. The aircraft was then sighted, by several witnesses, over the foothills heading in an easterly direction. These witnesses reported that the engines were not operating normally. A short time later, the aircraft was observed to pass over the dam wall at an altitude of about 25 feet and head down a valley in a northerly direction before disappearing from sight. An inspection of the wreckage indicated that the aircraft had collided with two 30 metre high trees, in a nose high attitude at a low forward airspeed, before falling to the ground below the trees. At impact neither engine was delivering power. The fuel system, which was found to be relatively intact, contained only nine litres of fuel. It was determined that the engines failed due to fuel starvation following the exhaustion of the useable fuel onboard the aircraft. The pilot was then faced with attempting a landing in unsuitable terrain. Evidence indicates that the aircraft departed Jandakot with both the fuel quantity indicating systems unserviceable. Although the maintenance documentation for the aircraft did not indicate that these systems were unserviceable, it is believed that the pilot was aware of the maintenance state of the aircraft before DEPARTURE.