

No. 26

Associated Airways Ltd., Lockheed 14-08, CF-TCI aircraft,
crashed on test flight at Winterburn, Alberta, 7 June 1955.
Report No. 55-28 released by Canadian Department of Transport.
Air Services Branch, Civil Aviation Division.

Circumstances

The aircraft took off at approximately 1700 hours Mountain Standard Time on a local test flight carrying a crew of 2 and 4 passengers. The purpose of the flight was to test the single-engine performance of the aircraft when loaded to the maximum permissible weight for take-off and to determine the correct power setting and performance. Just before 1705 hours witnesses stated that they saw the aircraft turn onto its back with a sudden cessation of engine noise and white or grey vapour was seen to come from both engines as it dived in a very steep nose down attitude to the ground. From statements of witnesses it was deduced that it was probable that the aircraft was below 1 000 feet when it turned onto its back. The aircraft exploded on impact and caught fire. All the occupants were killed and the aircraft was destroyed.

Investigation and Evidence

A major inspection (100 hour) had recently been carried out on the aircraft by the Company but had not been certified in the aircraft log books.

It was computed that the aircraft was overloaded by an amount in excess of 917 lbs. This included four cement blocks carried as

ballast and weighing 125 lbs. each. Moreover, it appeared that the crew were not properly conversant with loading requirements and centre of gravity limitations.

Although hampered by fire damage, the engines and air-screws were stripped and no evidence of malfunctioning was found.

The ignition switch was found with the master switch in the "off" position. The master switch was of the type that is pulled out for the "off" position.

No evidence was found of an emergency situation having arisen but in view of a previous emergency single-engine flight having been caused by an oil leak, it is possible that such might have reoccurred shortly after take-off.

Weather was not considered to have been a factor in the accident.

Probable Cause

For reasons that were not conclusively determined, the aircraft assumed an unusual position at an altitude above the ground which was insufficient to permit recovery. The aircraft was overloaded by at least 900 lbs. and this would raise the stalling speed and affect the controllability of the aircraft.