



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

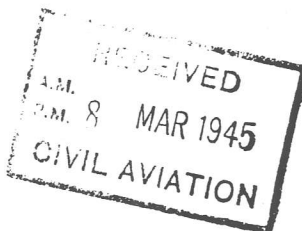
1/101/1036

Apr 1 1945

TELEPHONE:

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE OPERATOR-IN-CHARGE AND QUOTE

No.



DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION,

AERADIO STATION,
GOVERNMENT AERODROME,

CAIRNS. 5-3-45.

The Director-General,
Department of Civil Aviation,
MELBOURNE.

(13)

LOSS OF HUDSON AIRCRAFT AT CAIRNS - 5-3-45.

Attached herewith report from Mr. R.T. Stewart, A.C.O. on duty also copy of Aeradio Log covering communications with the aircraft also copy of weather report sent.

2. First Aeradio contact was at 1527 when VMZIFM called for weather report in Plusco. This was transmitted and acknowledged by the aircraft.
3. At 1530 an Aeradio Notice to Airmen was sent notifying that Cairns aerodrome was closed. This was repeated by Cooktown.
4. At 1615 VMZIFM called on voice saying that he was just off the coast and that the Skipper asked if worth while hanging round for a while as he had four hours fuel. The reply sent was that the weather people did not think there was any likelihood of any improvement. Whilst transmitting this the Tower informed me that the aircraft could be heard overhead. This information was passed on. One minute later the Tower reported that he could see him to the East of the drome. This was also passed to VMZIFM and he was asked if he could see the ground. He replied that he could see the strip. I then asked him if he intended coming in to land. He replied that he would have a try. Because of the poor visibility I switched on the Runway lights. No further communication was effected with the aircraft.
5. When informed by the Tower that the aircraft had crashed into the Barron River, I immediately telephoned 41 Squadron, Seaplane Base on the direct line and suggested that their crash launch be despatched to the scene.
6. I was on Aeradio watchkeeping at the time.

C.I.F.
8/3/45

W. L. Boyd

(W.L. BOYD)
Acting Operator-in-Charge.



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GOVERNMENT AERODROME,

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No.

CAIRNS 5.3.45

The Director General
Department Of Civil Aviation
Melbourne.

REPORT ON LOSS OF HUDSON AIRCRAFT AT CAIRNS, 4.3.45

- (1) At 1615 hours Aeradio passed information to me that VMZIFM, known as A16-118, was in vicinity and that the pilot said, "he had 4 hours fuel and was it worth while waiting for a break".

I said "no, from what weather people tell me, there is no chance of weather clearing, suggest you go on to Cooktown".

Two minutes later the aircraft was just glimpsed in the NNE for only a few seconds and headed approximately 120 degs, turning left as going out of sight at approximately 1000 feet. Told Aeradio I had seen the aircraft to the NNE.

A half minute later the aircraft was seen, closer and clearer and turning to head approximately 120 degs again. This time as it came out of the rain I picked it up in the glasses. The aircraft turned left until approximately headed NNW, still slowly descending and moving towards a lighter patch in the clouds, which at time was to the NNW of the aerodrome.

When only a short distance from the approach to the 150 deg runway, the aircraft again turned and headed approximately 120 degs, this time the aircraft was quite clear without glasses and would say much closer to the aerodrome. When in a position a little shorter than the two previous turns and at height of approximately 500 feet, the aircraft turned left, a flat turn, definitely no bank, on the turn and immediately after the turn, commenced, the aircraft went into a dive of approximately 40 degs for 200 feet and then flicked into an almost perpendicular dive for the remaining 300 feet.

The aircraft did not do on a complete spin but for the last 300 feet did flutter as if about to go into a spin.

Time of the crash was 1620 hours.

- (2) The three circuits that I am aware of were definitely short ones, giving the impression that the pilot did not wish to lose sight of some point or object in that area.
- (3) As the tail of the aircraft disappeared behind the trees, I sighted and drew a line on the control table showing direction of the crash.
- (4) Whilst I gave Duty crew the direction, the clerk rang Navy, the Aeradio operator rang 4I sq, the RAAF Commanding Officer rang the Army.
- (5) Within the first five minutes the following were under way: Crash crew and Ambulance, Army barges, Navy boats, 4I sq crash launch.
- (6) The Manager of ANA instructed that a Rapide be made ready. The pilot came to the tower and took his bearing from the line on the control tower table, he took off at 1644 hours.



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GOVERNMENT AERODROME,

- (7) At 1646 hours Capt Jackson, pilot of Rapide reported to the tower that he was over the wreckage and gave position as. $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 mile north of Barron River and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile off shore. He dropped lifebelts, described much wreckage and stated that from amount of wreckage, oil etc that aircraft must be badly smashed, he reported no sign of life. He directed boats to the locality, at 1700 hours he reported still no sign of life and would climb a little higher to see if could spot anything in the water from there, this proved equally fruitless as the heavy rains had ~~had~~ dirtied the sea. The search plane was over the spot for 26 minutes.
- (8) The aircraft departed Townsville at 1505, eta at Cairns 1605.
- (9) The Cairns aerodrome was closed owing to weather at 1530 hours.
- (10) I did expect the pilot of this aircraft to return to Townsville when he reached the heavier weather in the vicinity of Cairns but had made provisions for all information to be ready should he come on. For instance I had rang Mareeba and found the base to be 1000 feet overcast which with conditions here I would not divert the aircraft to Mareeba.
- (11) The copies of the weather at Cairns accompanying this report are as issued at the times to the tower by the Weather section.
- (12) I am sure that the aircraft did not attempt to work on tower frequencies.

R. J. Stewart

Aerodrome Control Officer

1	101	1036
		7.32

DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION

INWARDS TELEPHONED TELEGRAM

From Cairns Date 5/3/48
 To Aerial Time Rec'd
 Initials of Receiving Officer: _____

CS 170 Hudson A 16-118 carrying
 important personnel Downsville to
 Cairns crashed into sea at mouth
 of ~~BARR~~ River approx two miles NE
 of drome at 1620E no survivors found
 Full report being forwarded airmail
 Aerial.