

# ZK-HNA CAA Occurrence No.13/6300

## “Controlled flight into Terrain, Gladeburn “

### 15 December 2013

The following is a brief outline of ZK-HNA accident & investigation.

**Any information can be supplied upon request.**

- There are 8 submissions by various people who flew with the pilot concerned over a 30+year period. These can be distilled down to attest that the pilot was safe & professional. *(can be supplied)*
- Pilot had talked about an issue with eyesight approx 2 weeks prior to accident. *(R Knight)*
- One the day in question the pilot appeared well in morning, but leg became steadily worse throughout the day. *(Sarah de Reeper submission.)*  
***The symptoms could be indicative of possible DVT/medical issue***
- The pilot took off from Milford in conditions that were safe for the flight. *(short Video & Photos of flight to Rat point available.)*

Milford take off 3.48pm

Turn Marshall pass 3.56pm 3940ft*(video available)*

Land Greenstone 4.24pm *(photo available)*

Take off Greenstone 4.42pm approx

Arrive Rat point 4.46pm

Depart Rat point 4.49 pm

End Glade burn 5.08pm

*NB: These times are Daylight saving time. GPS time not adjusted for Daylight saving*

*GPS track available on both Google earth & Map toaster*

- Pilot turned around at Marshall pass and took longer route to Rat point.
- Pilot also turned and took longer & safer routes before entering the Greenstone Valley.
- **These decision shows the pilot was capable of flying safely and corroborates other pilot submissions.**
- The weather was improving over the course of the flight and subsequent search. Searching pilot's comments shows this.
- Pilot flew more direct route from Rat point to Dumpling Hut until turning and heading south at waypoint 449, Mistake creek. This is indicative of weather improving during course of afternoon.
- ***It is therefore assumed that the direct route between Pt 449 & Dumpling hut was blocked by cloud.***
- The southerly route would have taken him back to Glade Burn and then access to Dumpling hut via Neale burn & Clinton River.
- Pilot had transited through Glade Burn at 4.05 pm @ 4520 ft, (approx 60 minutes prior to impact)
- Pilot would have been aware of conditions in Glade burn and that weather was improving.
- Pilot transited through Hut creek to east of Triton peak.
- Pilot did not fly through Glade pass to enter Glade Valley, which would have been **logical route** if clear.
- ***It is therefore assumed there was cloud in Glade Pass***
- Pilot entered Waterfall creek and at point 484 made right hand turn to enter Glade burn.
- ***It is assumed pilot was heading toward pass on true right of Glade Burn( point 143).***
- Pilot had been through this area approx 60 minutes before, ***(4.05pm local time @4520 ft)***, and this pass remains open in most conditions.
- Pilot entered Glade Burn and turned right. (point 487 @4716Ft)
- Pilot tracked approx NW before descending in left turn to impact on True left of Glade Burn.(video of final track available)

### **Post accident**

- CAA investigators arrived and spent one day at accident site.
- CAA wanted to leave wreck on hillside until Jan 2014.
- Fiordland rainfall would have disrupted site and possibly washed evidence away.
- Wreckage was removed by 18/19<sup>th</sup> December.
- February 2014, McDonnell Douglas, Boeing & Rolls Royce personnel, investigated wreck.
- Subsequent report showed no known mechanical defects.
- March/April 2015 , CAA contacted family and gave assessment of cause as CFIT. And that report is with CAA legal dept being checked.
- March/April 2016,(**12 months later**). Draft report released to family & Milford Helicopters.

- May 16 2016, meeting with family & pilots Te Anau to discuss draft report. (*Audio file & transcript of meeting available. NB written transcript not complete*).
- 30 Aug 2016 final report received

### Conclusion

- Draft report had serious errors. (*Draft report and assessment of report can be supplied.*)
- We believe that the pass the pilot was heading toward would require bearing left. ( this pass is on true left of glade burn)
- No **logical** reason for pilot to turn right & back toward head of Glade burn.
- The symptoms described lend toward a medical event.
- CAA claim pilot turned away from protruding bluff and therefore entered cloud. **There is no protruding bluff.** (*video can be supplied*)
- We have received the final report and read the conclusions with some uneasiness and disquiet.
- Up until receiving the final report we have endeavored to work with CAA in this investigation.
- This investigation has been riddled with errors and poor judgment by CAA from the beginning.
- We do not believe the conclusions reached by CAA reflect the evidence.
- We understand that there will never be a definitive cause to this accident and we accept that.
- **However we do not accept the CAA reconstruction of events leading up to the impact**
- The CAA has a duty of care to the aviation community and to the general public at large.
- This duty of care also includes investigating all accidents to determine the cause. We believe that CAA has failed in that duty.
- This is not the first instance where this is this case and until there is a change of culture within the Department, it will not be the last.

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