

The Border Mail

No wing, no take-off at Mount Beauty Airport

By Shana Morgan Dec. 6, 2015, 3:12 p.m.



GROUNDING: The light sports aircraft that lost its wing in a crash will stay at Mount Beauty Airport until it is repaired.
Pictures: MARK JESSER

An early-morning flight at Mount Beauty ended in an expensive bingle for a light sports aircraft that lost its wing on Sunday.

The 52-year-old pilot from Gundowring had been in town for the airport's "gathering of the moths" on Saturday.

He planned to take off at 7.45am before the journey became bumpy for the single-seater plane in the forecast heat of 36 degrees.

Leading Senior Constable Peter Johns, of Mount Beauty police, said the journey went wrong before the plane left the ground.

"On take-off the pilot has lost control," he said.

"He veered left where a lot of aircraft were."

The plane crashed into a four-seater aircraft owned by a Sydney pilot, worth \$160,000, causing damage to its wing.

The smaller \$12,000 plane was damaged much worse, ripping off its wing and propeller.



WRONG PLACE, WRONG TIME: The four-seater general aviation aircraft from Sydney parked near the the runway suffered damaged to its wing in the crash.

Leading Senior Constable Johns said the pilot was uninjured.

"He believed he was taking off and he's hit a bump in the grass tarmac area," he said.

A witness to the crash told *The Border Mail* he watched as the plane veered violently off the track.

He said he inspected the runway later, but found no sign of any bumps.

Conditions in the morning had been clear, without much wind around.

The plane crash put a dampener on a successful weekend for the annual "gathering of the moths" that attracted about 40 different aircraft to the town.



HAPPIER TIMES: The busy Mount Beauty Airport on Saturday for the gathering of the moths.

Mount Beauty Airport secretary John Hillard said the Gundowring pilot was not a regular member at the airport.

"It's just a shame because we had such a great weekend," he said.

"We do a lot to support the local aviation community."

The event brought sports and home-built aircraft, gliders, parachuting groups and owners of historic planes together for the day.

Many had a chance to show off their machines in the air in front of a decent crowd.

A local collector also brought along his display of vintage cars from 1911 to 1924.

"We try to encourage the local community to come along," Mr Hillard said.

The incident will be investigated by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau and Recreational Aviation Australia.

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