

## Pilot Dan Compton says accident at Dubbo City Regional Airport won't stop him from flying

Mark Rayner 31 Oct 2016, 6:30 p.m.



No injuries: Emergency services at the scene of a light plane crash. The two occupants of the plane were assessed and released by paramedics. Photos: BELINDA SOOLE

**A Dubbo-based pilot said he won't be put off flying after he and another occupant had to make a hasty escape from their burning plane at Dubbo Regional Airport on Monday.**

Dan Compton, the owner of Wings Out West, was in the process of taking off when a gust of wind upset the plane and caused it to make contact with the runway.

The collision ruptured a fuel line, which then started the fire.

Both occupants were able to escape without injury and despite the frightening incident, Mr Compton said he wouldn't be put off.

"Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on how you look at it, I've only ever been a pilot, I've always wanted to be a pilot and I am only trained as a pilot so the only thing I can do is get back out there," he said.

"When something like this happens, it makes you question things but if there is a lesson to be learned we should learn it, otherwise we just move on.

"If this was all because of a wind gust then it was just bad luck but if something else comes out [of the investigation] then we learn from it."

Mr Compton said he hoped people wouldn't be too quick to jump to negative conclusions about plane safety because of the accident.

"Some people will look at this and say 'planes are dangerous' but I look at the upside of this, which is that we had

this fairly serious accident and both people walked away without injury,” he said.

“It was very heavy contact that ruptured the fuel line

“The plane did its job and allowed us to get out safely.”

Mr Compton said his plane was destroyed and wouldn’t fly again, but he said it was a small sacrifice when no one was hurt. He said emergency services deserved plenty of praise for their role.

“If this happened at an airport with an immediate response unit, they may have been able to save the plane but unfortunately Dubbo doesn’t have that,” he said.

“However the fire response was very quick anyway and all of the emergency services did an amazing job. I can’t thank them enough.

“Police, fire and ambulance were all there and were great, as was Lindsay Mason from the airport.”

Mr Compton is an experienced pilot and spent 12 years with the Royal Australian Air Force, before flying for the Royal Flying Doctor Service and then setting up Wings Out West. He said everything was normal prior to take-off but said the plane was caught out by the wind.

“As far as I can tell, it was an incident caused by the weather. There was a wind gust and it was just an unfortunate circumstance,” he said. “When there is only two crew, there isn’t much you can do but get out of there as quickly as possible. Unfortunately all we could do then was watch it burn.”

Extracted from:

<http://www.dailyliberal.com.au/story/4261856/crash-wont-ground-pilot/>

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