



Pilot of light plane makes emergency landing on Tasmanian beach

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A pilot on a solo flight escapes with only a scratched finger after his plane makes an emergency landing on a beach and then flips over in the soft sand.



The plane flipped upon landing due to the soft sand. (Credit: ABC)

A pilot on a solo flight escaped with only a scratched finger after his plane made an emergency landing on a beach and then flipped over in the soft sand.

George Calka, 61, left Sandfly, near Hobart, in his single-engine light plane on Thursday night, headed for St Helens on the east coast.

Nearing his destination, the Launceston pilot found fog obscuring the airstrip.

With only half an hour's worth of fuel left, Mr Calka said he was unable to continue or turn back to reach an alternative strip.

He began to consider his options to get the plane safely back on the ground.

"I didn't want to risk landing in someone else's back yard or hook up on the power lines or land in the trees," he said.

"The best plan B I could imagine was to land on the beach, where there were no obstructions.

"Unfortunately, the sand was a bit softer than I expected."

Mr Calki said he landed the plane and it almost rolled to a stop.

But about 20 metres before the plane would have come to rest, one of the front wheels dug into 4WD ruts left in the soft sand.

The front suspension broke and the plane nose-dived and flipped.

"Unfortunately, it didn't go [flip] 360 degrees," Mr Calki said.

"I'm OK," he said, besides a scratch on his finger.

Extracted from:

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