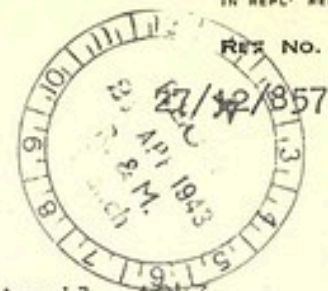


A.—1A.]

All Correspondence should be addressed to:  
"T & A" SECRETARY,  
AIR DEPARTMENT,  
WELLINGTON C.1."



AIR DEPARTMENT,  
WELLINGTON C.1.



P1

19th April, 1943.

FILE.

MEMORANDUM for:-

The Honourable the Minister of Defence

/ /19 \_\_\_\_\_ Initials

ACCIDENT - WALRUS NZ153 - 18.3.43 - HOBSONVILLE  
Pilot Officer Moris McIntyre BEE, Killed  
NZ42395 Sergeant LESLIE, D.A. } Slightly injured  
NZ414441 AC2 LARKMAN, A.M. }

At approximately 2300 hours on the 18th March 1943, the above mentioned aircraft was engaged in night flying practice which included the making of night landings with Sergeant Leslie as pilot, Pilot Officer Bee as second pilot, and AC2 Larkman as flight engineer. Sergeant Leslie was at the controls, and according to the findings of the Court of Inquiry appointed to investigate the accident it appears that when taking off after a practice landing, Sergeant Leslie inadvertently pushed the mixture control lever past the "normal rich" position to the "weak" position when adjusting it, causing the engine to stop. This mistake is not difficult to make, particularly at night. The aircraft struck the water and finally sank, lodging nose down and half submerged on a mud bank. Sergeant Leslie and AC2 Larkman succeeded in extricating themselves and only suffered minor injuries. Pilot Officer Bee was trapped in the forward compartment of the aircraft, and in spite of repeated efforts by Flying Officer S.A. Evans, the Squadron engineer officer, to reach the cockpit by diving, Pilot Officer Bee could not be rescued in time to save his life. The aircraft was eventually pulled over onto an even keel, and Pilot Officer Bee's body floated up. Artificial respiration was carried out and stimulants were applied to no purpose.

The Court of Inquiry reached it's conclusion regarding the cause of the accident after practical tests on an engine similar in type to that of Walrus NZ153, and has found that there was no negligence or lack of discipline. Instructions have issued to implement the recommendation of the Court of Inquiry.

*Seen*  
*[Signature]*  
20.4.43



*[Signature]*  
Air Commodore  
AIR FORCE MEMBER FOR PERSONNEL