

# SEVEN KILLED IN AIR CRASH

## Plane Hurtles Down Island Peak

Seven men were killed when an R.A.A.F. Catalina flying-boat from Rathmines, N.S.W., crashed on a mountain peak on Lord Howe Island last night. 29-9-48

The plane, a blazing wreck, hurtled down the steep mountainside after the crash.

Two survivors were dragged from the wreckage before flames prevented further rescues.

The survivors are Flight Lieutenant R. Bradley and Warrant Officer Lea. Both were injured in the crash.

Air Force authorities early this morning had not learned the names of those killed.

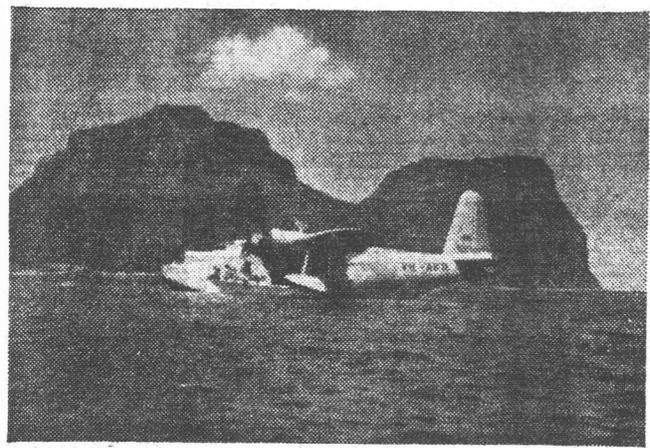


Photo shows the mountainous northern end of Lord Howe Island, with Mt. Lidgberg (where the Catalina crashed) on the right.

29.9.48 (SYDNEY PAPER)

The Catalina was working with H.M.A.S. Australia, which is carrying out manoeuvres off the coast of Lord Howe Island.

The flying-boat struck 2,800-foot Mt. Lidgberg, on the northern side of the island, at about 7 p.m. during a night navigational flight.

It then hurtled to the bottom of a steep decline.

Islanders and tourists holidaying at Lord Howe hurried toward the wreckage after hearing an explosion high up in the mountains.

Another Catalina from the Rathmines R.A.A.F. station, near Newcastle, will leave for Lord Howe Island at dawn today with a doctor and two nurses. It will bring the survivors to Sydney.

The Catalina will land at Rose Bay and the injured airmen will be taken to the R.A.A.F. hospital at Concord.

Lord Howe Island is 500 miles east-north-east of Sydney, and has a population of 180.

A flying-boat base lies in a partly-sheltered lagoon at the base of the island's two mountain peaks.

It is used regularly by Qantas Empire Airways and Trans-Oceanic Airways, which operate flying-boat services between Sydney and Lord Howe.

### CIRCLING ISLAND

The lagoon makes an ideal landing area for flying-boats, but only in daylight and at high tide.

Managing director of Trans-Oceanic Airways, Squadron-Leader Bryan Monkton, who frequently pilots a flying-boat from Sydney to Lord Howe, said last night that the island had no night landing facilities.

It was most unlikely, he said, that the Catalina, before the crash, was preparing to land on the lagoon.

It was possible that the plane was circling the island as part of its navigational exercise.

Both mountains often had their peaks shrouded in cloud even in reasonably fine weather, he said.