

1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

4 miles west south-west of Narrromine, N. S. W.	Height a.m.s.l. (ft) 776 feet	Date 14.11.71	Time (Local) approx. 1825	Zone ESuT
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2. THE AIRCRAFT

Make and Model Piper PA28/180 "Cherokee"	Registration VH-POK	Certificate of Airworthiness	Valid from 22.7.66	Valid to 21.7.75
Registered Owner Condobolin Aero Club Ltd., P.O. Box 104, Condobolin, New South Wales.	Operator Condobolin Aero Club Ltd., P.O. Box 104, Condobolin, New South Wales.	Degree of damage to aircraft Destroyed		
Defects discovered Nil.		Other property damaged Nil		

3. THE FLIGHT

Last or intended departure point Narrromine	Time of departure 1820	Next point of intended landing Condobolin	Purpose of flight Travel	Class of operation Private
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4. THE CREW

Name	Status	Age	Class of licence	Hours on type	Total hours	Degree of injury
James Wilton MARSHMAN	Pilot	40	Private	93	101	Fatal
Conrad Leslie CAREY	Pilot	42	Private	127	262	Fatal

5. OTHER PERSONS (All passengers and persons injured on ground)

Name	Status	Degree of injury	Name	Status	Degree of injury
Joseph Carl WALSH	Passenger	Fatal	Henry MAHON	Passenger	Fatal

6. RELEVANT EVENTS

The four occupants of the aircraft were members of Condobolin Aero Club and each held a Private Pilot Licence. Earlier in the day they had flown from Condobolin to Narrromine to take part in a flying competition. Four other club members had also flown to Narrromine in another Club aircraft. A flight plan covering both the outward and the return flight of VH-POK had been submitted to Dubbo Flight Service Unit by telephone indicating that Walsh would be the pilot-in-command. Walsh had occupied the left front seat on the outward flight with Carey in the right front seat. For the return flight Marshman occupied the left front seat with Carey again in the right front seat. The aircraft was fitted with full dual controls. From the evidence available it was not possible to determine who was the pilot-in-command.

When the two aircraft departed from Narrromine for the return flight there were isolated thunderstorms in the area. The pilot of the other aircraft took off 1½ minutes ahead of VH-POK, made a routine departure call to the Dubbo Flight Service Unit, and completed the flight to Condobolin without difficulty. He later reported that, although he had made a diversion soon after take-off to avoid light rain showers, there were no storms at that time in the vicinity of the accident site. No radio communications were received from VH-POK either on the Flight Service frequency or the Narrromine Club frequency. The wreckage of the aircraft was found next morning in a large open field about four miles from Narrromine and one mile to the right of the direct track. The aircraft had struck the ground in a steep nose-down, left wing-down attitude and bounced a distance of thirty feet before coming to rest.

At a prize-giving ceremony held in the clubrooms at the conclusion of the flying competition drinks had been served but Marshman drank only lemonade. Post-mortem examinations disclosed that in the case of Marshman, who had occupied the left control seat, the level of blood alcohol was nil, but in the case of the occupant of the right control seat, Carey, the level was such that, had he been pilot-in-command, his ability to so act would have been impaired. The examinations also disclosed that the occupants of the rear seats had consumed alcohol.

7. OPINION AS TO CAUSE

From the evidence available it has not been possible to determine the cause of the accident.

Report released

(D. S. GRAHAM)

Designation

Assistant Director-General
(Air Safety Investigation)

Date

7.2.1973