

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SUMMARY REPORT

Reference No.

AS/701/1028

1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

21 miles west of Townsville, Queensland.	Height a.m.s.l. (ft) 2100 feet	Date 8.8.70	Time (Local) 1018	Zone EST
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2. THE AIRCRAFT

Make and Model Piper PA23-250	Registration VH-CVN	Certificate of Airworthiness	Valid from 19.3.69	Valid to 18.3.78
Registered Owner Koki Holdings Pty. Ltd., P.O. Box 9, Port Moresby, Papua.	Operator Mr. C.A. Towers, P.O. Box 9, Port Moresby, Papua.	Degree of damage to aircraft Destroyed		
Defects discovered		Other property damaged Nil		

3. THE FLIGHT

Last or intended departure point Cherfield	Time of departure 0613	Next point of intended landing Townsville	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
Colin Aberdeen TOWERS	Pilot	49	Private	250 approx.	750 approx.	Fatal

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

Name	Status	Degree of injury	Name	Status	Degree of injury
Morris TIE	Passenger	Fatal			

6. CONTRAVENTIONS OF REGULATIONS AND ORDERS

Regulation or Order No.	Nature of contravention
A.N.R. 149(2)	The pilot conducted a VFR flight in meteorological conditions which were less than the minimum prescribed for such flights.

7. RELEVANT EVENTS

The pilot obtained area and terminal weather forecasts and submitted a flight plan for a VFR flight below 5,000 feet. Although advised that low cloud and poor visibility were expected towards Townsville, he did not nominate an alternate aerodrome, but indicated that he was aware that there were several suitable aerodromes en route. During the flight he was kept informed of the Townsville weather situation and at 0924 hours he was advised that Townsville was closed to VFR flights. Although the aircraft carried sufficient fuel for diversion to a suitable aerodrome, the pilot elected to proceed to a position 20-25 miles west of Townsville and hold outside controlled airspace. At 0942 he reported that he was beneath cloud, visual and that he had Townsville in sight. The weather at Townsville had improved slightly and he was given and acknowledged a clearance to enter the control zone with the requirement that within the zone he should maintain visual flight with reference to the ground. At 0952 the pilot reported that he was about 30 miles west of Townsville and at about this time an aircraft, believed to be VH-CVN, was seen 38 miles west of Townsville heading north in heavy rain beneath a 200 feet cloud base. The pilot was given heading information by Townsville to assist his navigation, but at 1018 communications were lost. The wreckage was found in mountainous country 21 miles west of Townsville. The aircraft had struck a timbered ridge about 150 feet below the crest while in almost level flight and on an easterly heading.

8. OPINION AS TO CAUSE

The probable cause of the accident was that the pilot proceeded into weather conditions in which visual flight with adequate terrain clearance could not be maintained.

Report approved <i>E. S. Graham</i> (D.S. GRAHAM)	Designation Assistant Director-General (Air Safety Investigation)	Date 27.7.71
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