

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SUMMARY REPORT

AS/733/1063

Publication of this report is authorised by the Director-General of Civil Aviation under the provisions of Air Navigation Regulation 283(1)

1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

Andover, Tasmania	Height a.m.s.l. 1400 feet	Date 10.12.73	Time (Local) 1910 hours	Zone ESuT
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2. THE AIRCRAFT

Make and Model Piper PA25/235 Pawnee	Registration VH-TSF	Certificate of Airworthiness Valid from 5.7.65 to 4.7.74
Certificate of Registration issued to Airmist Pty. Ltd., Hangar 50B, Airport, Parafield, South Australia.	Operator Benders Spreading Services (1964) Pty. Ltd., P.O. Box 259, Moonah, Tasmania.	Degree of damage to aircraft Destroyed Other property damaged One sheep killed
Defects discovered Nil.		

3. THE FLIGHT

Last or intended departure point Agricultural Airstrip Andover	Time of departure 1908 hours	Next point of intended landing Point of Departure	Purpose of flight Superphosphate Spreading	Class of operation Aerial Work
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4. THE CREW

Name	Status	Age	Class of licence	Hours on type	Total hours	Degree of injury
Roy PICKARD	Pilot	32	Commercial	130	448	Fatal

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

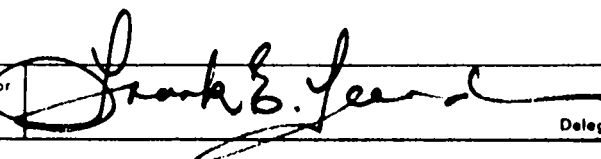
Name	Status	Degree of injury	Name	Status	Degree of injury

6. RELEVANT EVENTS

Mr. Pickard flew VH-TSF from Cambridge to the Andover agricultural airstrip at about 0630 hours in company with another Pawnee aircraft and pilot. The two aircraft were assigned to participate in a super-phosphate spreading operation covering several properties in the Andover area. At about 0800 hours both pilots made a joint aerial inspection of the properties to be treated and they individually commenced operations at about 0835 hours. Operations continued throughout the day with brief pauses for refuelling and a 30 minute meal break. Shortly after 1700 hours each aircraft was again refuelled and the two pilots decided that, regarding the ideal weather conditions that existed, they would continue operations for a further period. By approximately 1845 hours they had completed spreading all but some portions of the north-western section of the property in the vicinity of the airstrip. They then made a joint aerial inspection of the areas still to be treated and it was decided that Mr. Pickard would treat a small area in a gully immediately to the north of the airstrip and that he would make a series of west to east runs to avoid operating into the sun. The other pilot and aircraft were to operate over an area to the east. VH-TSF took off in an easterly direction and, after turning left through 180 degrees, flew along the northern edge of the gully. As it passed over the western boundary of the area to be treated it descended and turned left onto a southerly heading directly towards a timbered ridge line. The aircraft then levelled out briefly before the engine noise was heard to decrease and it commenced a steep descending turn to the right. After turning through approximately 180 degrees, superphosphate was dumped from the aircraft and the starboard wing struck the upper branches of a tall gum tree located on the edge of a small clearing where sheep were grazing. The port wing dropped rapidly and the aircraft dived steeply to the ground. Although the circumstances suggest an unexpected loss of engine power it was determined that the aircraft had adequate fuel and the wreckage examination did not reveal any evidence of engine defect. This examination, however, was severely restricted by the effects of a fierce fire which broke out shortly after impact.

OPINION AS TO CAUSE

There is insufficient evidence available to determine the cause of this accident.

Approved for
publication

(Frank E. Yeend)

Delegate of the Director-General of Civil Aviation

Date
24.12.1974

DEFINITIONS

ACCIDENT - An occurrence associated with the operation of an aircraft which takes place between the time any person boards the aircraft with the intention of flight until such time as all those persons have disembarked and in which

- (a) any person suffers death or serious injury as a result of being in or upon the aircraft or by direct contact with the aircraft or anything attached to the aircraft; or
- (b) the aircraft suffers substantial damage.

FATAL INJURY - Any injury which results in death within 30 days.

SERIOUS INJURY - Any injury other than a fatal injury which

- (a) requires hospitalisation for more than 48 hours, commencing within seven days from the date the injury was received; or
- (b) results in a fracture of any bone (except simple fractures of fingers, toes or nose); or
- (c) involves lacerations which cause severe haemorrhages, nerve, muscle or tendon damage; or
- (d) involves injury to any internal organ; or
- (e) involves second or third degree burns, or any burns affecting more than five percent of the body surface.

MINOR INJURY - Any injury other than as defined under "Fatal Injury" or "Serious Injury".

DESTROYED - Consumed by fire, demolished or damaged beyond repair.

SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE - Damage or structural failure which adversely affects the structural strength, performance or flight characteristics of the aircraft and which would normally require major repair or replacement of the affected component. The following types of damage are specifically excluded: engine failure, damage limited to an engine, bent fairings or cowlings, dented skin, small punctured holes in the skin or fabric, taxi-ing damage to propeller blades, damage to tyres, engine accessories, brakes, or wingtips.

MINOR DAMAGE - Damage other than as defined under "Destroyed" or "Substantial Damage".