

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199003047**

Piper PA36-285 Pawnee Brave

26 January 1990

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Investigations commenced on or before 30 June 2003, including the publication of reports as a result of those investigations, are authorised by the CEO of the Bureau in accordance with Part 2A of the Air Navigation Act 1920.

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NOTE: All air safety occurrences reported to the ATSB are categorised and recorded. For a detailed explanation on Category definitions please refer to the ATSB website at www.atsb.gov.au.

This accident was not formally investigated by the Bureau.

Occurrence Number: 199003047 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: Harcourt (125 km SSW of Rockhampton) QLD
Date: 26 January 1990 **Time:** 845
Highest Injury Level: Minor
Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	1	0

Aircraft Details: Piper PA36-285 Pawnee
 Brave
Registration: VH-SEJ
Serial Number: 36-7560051
Operation Type: Aerial Work
Damage Level: Destroyed
Departure Point: North Moura QLD
Departure Time: 0735
Destination: North Moura QLD

Approved for Release: 20th April 1990

Circumstances:

The pilot had almost completed spraying herbicide on a field of cotton which was bordered in part by the Dawson River and its associated tree line. The pilot reported that he was making a right turn over the river, which is a conglomerate of channels and gullies, to position the aircraft for a cleanup run. During the turn, he was trying to assess whether a single run would suffice, or if two runs would be required to cover the curved northern boundary of the paddock. The pilot stated that he then suddenly became aware of foliage directly in front of him. The aircraft struck the branches of a large gum tree, lost a 2.5 metre section of right wing, dived into the ground, and came to rest inverted 75 metres from initial impact. There was no fire despite both wing tanks being ruptured. The battery was thrown from the aircraft at initial ground impact. The wing tanks were foam filled, which reduced fuel spillage when the tanks were ruptured, and prevented fuel spraying over the wreckage whilst the aircraft was breaking up. The pilot was wearing protective clothing including a helmet, overalls and boots. The safety harness was in good condition and did not fail. The cockpit remained intact despite complete destruction of the fuselage, and consequently the pilot was protected from sustaining other than minor injuries and was able to extricate himself from the wreckage.