

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198503530**

Piper PA28-161 "Warrior"

18 August 1985

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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.

Occurrence Number: 198503530
Location: Cairns QLD
Date: 18 August 1985
Highest Injury Level: Nil
Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	1	1
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	1
Total	0	0	0	2

Aircraft Details: Piper PA28-161 "Warrior"
Registration: VH-PZH
Serial Number:
Operation Type: Pleasure
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: Cairns QLD
Departure Time: 1624
Destination: Cairns QLD

Approved for Release: 26th September, 1985

Circumstances:

The pilot intended to drop a flour bomb at a local cricket ground. He subsequently advised that during the run-in to drop the bomb at 400 feet agl a downdraft was encountered. Full power was rapidly applied but the engine faltered and the aircraft collided with the top of a tree at a height of about 35 feet agl. Some 40 people were gathered under this tree at the time. The impact shattered the windscreen and the cockpit was filled with debris, and a 2 metre limb remained attached to the horizontal stabiliser. The pilot was able to retain control of the aircraft and a safe landing was carried out at the destination aerodrome. No evidence was found to support the pilot's claim that the aircraft was affected by a downdraft. It was possible that the pilot was distracted by the actions required to drop the flour bomb, and did not pay sufficient attention to the area ahead of the aircraft.