

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198900823**

Piper PA 32-300

25 August 1989

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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: 198900823

Occurrence Type: Accident

Location: 5 km E Kingoonya SA

Date: 25 August 1989

Time: 1840

Highest Injury Level: Nil

Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	1	1
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	2
Total	0	0	0	3

Aircraft Details: Piper PA 32-300

Registration: VH-RJV

Serial Number: 32-40068

Operation Type: Private

Damage Level: Substantial

Departure Point: Parafield SA

Departure Time: 1547

Destination: Tarcoola SA

Approved for Release: 8th September 1989

Circumstances:

During routine fuel management enroute, the pilot had selected in turn the right TIP tank, the right MAIN tank and then the left MAIN tank. To complete his pre-descent checks, the pilot elected to leave the fuel selector on what he thought was the left MAIN tank. The pilot had previously notified a change of destination as Kingoonya due to the onset of last light. At about 1800 feet on descent, the engine coughed and stopped although the propeller kept turning. The pilot completed his trouble checks including changing the tank selection to the next position to the left on the selector panel which he thought was the left TIP tank. Engine power was not restored, so the pilot continued to concentrate on the forced landing. At a few hundred feet above the ground, the pilot recalled making a final check of the fuel selector position and found that it was in the OFF position. The left MAIN tank was reselected but the engine did not respond before the aircraft touched down. During the landing roll, the nosewheel struck a fallen branch and the noseleg folded under the nose cowl. The investigation established that the pilot had flown only five hours in the last three months, one hour in the last thirty days and had a total of only eleven hours on type.

Significant Factors:

The following factors were considered relevant to the development of the accident

1. The pilot had minimal flying currency and was inexperienced on type.
2. The pilot experienced a false hypothesis with regards to his selection of the fuel tank on which he was operating and did not positively check his selection of a fuel tank during his trouble checks.
3. The engine suffered fuel starvation and an attempt to rectify the problem was made with insufficient time for engine recovery.