

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198902573**

Piper PA60-601P

22 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: 198902573
Location: Warnervale NSW
Date: 22 August 1989
Highest Injury Level: Minor
Injuries:

Occurrence Type: Accident

Time: 1236 hours

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	4
Total	0	0	1	4

Aircraft Details: Piper PA60-601P
Registration: VH-MNM
Serial Number: 61P-0578-7963253
Operation Type: Private
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: Taree NSW
Departure Time: 1200 hours
Destination: Warnervale

Approved for Release: 27th April 1992

Circumstances:

Earlier in the day the pilot had flown from Bankstown to Taree with an intermediate landing at Warnervale. Before departing Taree, the pilot said the oil quantities were checked for both engines and found to be adequate for the return flight to Bankstown via Warnervale. The track to Warnervale was via the coastal route of the Williamstown military control zone (CTR) at 500 ft. Leaving the CTR, the pilot initiated a cruise climb to 3,000 ft. Passing 700 ft, the left engine began to vibrate and lost power. The engine was shut down and the climb continued to 1,500 feet. The pilot decided to continue to Warnervale rather than divert to RAAF Williamstown which was closer. He unsuccessfully attempted to restart the left engine whilst tracking to Warnervale. On arrival, the aircraft was positioned to join the circuit on an oblique left base for runway 20. As the aircraft passed over the threshold with the landing gear and full flap extended, the pilot applied full power and commenced a missed approach when he assessed the aircraft was too high and too fast. The rate of climb was less than anticipated following gear and flap retraction and when it became apparent the aircraft might collide with trees beyond the southern boundary of the airstrip, the pilot elected to land wheels-up on the overrun. The aircraft slid along swampy ground and collided with a large eucalypt log. During a subsequent strip examination, it was determined the left engine oil quantity was low. Glazing was also observed in several cylinder bores. As the engine design incorporated hydraulic tappets, it is considered probable that the low oil quantity affected the operation of the tappets and caused the vibration and loss of power. The reason for the apparent rapid loss of oil from the left engine after DEPARTURE Taree was not determined.

Significant Factors:

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

1. Vibration and loss of power in flight from the left engine which required the engine to be shut down.
2. The pilot failed to divert to the most suitable airport.
3. The pilot misjudged height and speed on approach to runway 20.
4. The pilot attempted a single engine missed approach from an unsafe height.