

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198602352**

Piper PA 24-250

11 October 1986

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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 subject to an on scene investigation.

Occurrence Number: 198602352

Occurrence Type: Accident

Location: Moree NSW

Date: 11 October 1986

Time: 1845 approx

Highest Injury Level: Nil

Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	1	1
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	3
Total	0	0	0	4

Aircraft Details: Piper PA 24-250

Registration: VH-GED

Serial Number:

Operation Type: Private (Travel)

Damage Level: Substantial

Departure Point: Coonamble NSW

Departure Time: 1750 approx

Destination: Moree NSW

Approved for Release: February 12th 1987

Circumstances:

The aircraft normally used by the pilot was unserviceable, and he had obtained the use of the PA 24, a type he had not flown for about 3 years. The initial leg of the flight was uneventful, but departure for the return journey had been delayed, and the aircraft arrived at the destination at about last light. When the gear was selected down, a complete electrical failure occurred. The pilot was unable to read the instructions for manual lowering of the gear, which were printed on a cover on the cockpit floor, because there was not a torch available. He therefore decided to land as soon as possible, as the grass strip selected was not lit. The landing was made about 10 minutes after last light, and the aircraft slid for about 60 metres before coming to rest on the strip. No defect was found to account for the electrical failure reported by the pilot. It was likely that when conducting the pre-landing checks, he had inadvertently operated the master switch in mistake for the fuel pump switch. Probably because of the pilot's concern of approaching darkness, and his lack of recent experience on the type, he had been unable to resolve the electrical problem in the time available.