

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198901552**

Piper PA36-300

30 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: 198901552

Occurrence Type: Accident

Location: 5 km SW of Teesdale VIC

Date: 30 August 1989

Time: 1205

Highest Injury Level: Nil

Injuries:

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

Aircraft Details: Piper PA36-300

Registration: VH-SVO

Serial Number: 36-7560094

Operation Type: Aerial Work

Damage Level: Substantial

Departure Point: 5 km SW of Teesdale VIC

Departure Time: 1205

Destination: 5 km SW of Teesdale VIC

Approved for Release: 15th November 1989

Circumstances:

The pilot was taking off to the west from a 620 metre agricultural airstrip with a load of 420 kilograms of urea. The strip was level and the grass was short. The wind was from the west-north-west at about 5 knots. The pilot used 15 degrees of flap for the takeoff. The engine produced full power. During the takeoff roll initial acceleration seemed normal but then it stagnated. The pilot began dumping the load at about two thirds of the way down the strip. At about 55 to 60 knots indicated airspeed the aircraft became airborne and was about one foot off the ground when it struck a fence. After the accident it was discovered that there was about 200 kilograms of urea still in the hopper despite the dump valve being open. Soon after the accident the company chief pilot inspected the airstrip and discovered that the surface was deceptive. It looked reasonably firm but had been affected by recent very heavy rains. In his opinion the surface would have retarded the takeoff performance about the same as long wet grass. He also believed that the pilot was slow in dumping the load. The Class 2 agricultural pilot was operating under indirect supervision at the time of the accident. This accident was not the subject of a formal on scene investigation.

Significant Factors:

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

1. Heavy rain had fallen on the airstrip in the days prior to the accident.
2. The strip surface retarded the aircraft during the takeoff.
3. The pilot was slow to initiate dumping of the load.