

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
199003108**

**Piper PA28-180**

**11 November 1990**

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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](http://www.atsb.gov.au).**

**Occurrence Number:** 199003108  
**Location:** Milparinka NSW  
**Date:** 11 November 1990  
**Highest Injury Level:** Fatal  
**Injuries:**

**Occurrence Type:** Accident  
**Time:** 1441

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	1	0	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	2	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Aircraft Details:** Piper PA28-180  
**Registration:** VH-PYJ  
**Serial Number:** 28-2585  
**Operation Type:** Private  
**Damage Level:** Destroyed  
**Departure Point:** Milparinka NSW  
**Departure Time:** 1435  
**Destination:** Milparinka NSW

**Approved for Release:** 13th December 1990

#### **Circumstances:**

A party of people comprising five pilots and the family of one of the pilots left Shepparton on Friday 9th November in two aircraft. They intended using their destination, Milparinka, as a base for further flying over the weekend. On Saturday and Sunday mornings, both aircraft were observed engaged in low flying activities. On Sunday afternoon, a discussion amongst a number of the pilots centred around streamer cutting and flour bombing activities. As a result, two of the pilots were keen to try their hand at flour bombing and packed four packs of flour for the exercise. The aircraft subsequently took off with one of the local residents occupying the front right seat and the other pilot in the rear seat directly behind the pilot-in-command. On the first bombing pass, the aircraft flew past the hotel at about 50 feet above ground level. One pack of flour was dropped from the pilot's storm window. The pack struck the ground some 70 metres beyond the hotel. Witnesses reported that on the second pass the aircraft was slow and even lower than on the previous pass. When the aircraft was in front of the hotel, they saw that the two pilots were trying to push a pack of flour out of the storm window, where it had apparently become jammed. The aircraft then pulled up and entered a steeply banked turn left. The left wing struck the roof of the courthouse which is located 100 metres beyond the hotel. The impact buckled the left wing tip and bent the outboard two metres of wing up at an angle of approximately ten degrees. The left bank gradually increased to in excess of 90 degrees, and the aircraft turned through 180 degrees before striking trees. It cartwheeled, crashed upside down in a dry river bed and caught fire. The first people on the scene were unable to assist the occupants.

#### **Significant Factors:**

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

1. The pilot exercised poor judgement in attempting a low level flour bombing operation. The investigation into this accident was terminated when it became apparent that further work would not disclose any new safety enhancement information.