

Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198903777

Piper PA28-235

27 May 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: 198903777 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: 1 km SW of Orchid Beach, Fraser Is. QLD
Date: 27 May 1989 **Time:** 1203
Highest Injury Level: Fatal
Injuries:

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

Aircraft Details: Piper PA28-235
Registration: VH-DOC
Serial Number: 28-11311
Operation Type: Charter
Damage Level: Destroyed
Departure Point: Orchid Beach QLD
Departure Time: 1203
Destination: Hervey Bay QLD

Approved for Release: 5th March 1990

Circumstances:

The flight from Orchid Beach was to transport three passengers to Hervey Bay where they were booked on a scheduled flight departing at 1215 hours. The aircraft arrived at Orchid Beach at about 1200 hours, and the pilot hastily loaded the aircraft and departed. The takeoff appeared to be normal. The aircraft was seen to make a right turn at about 250 feet above the ground, level with a ridge to the southwest of the aerodrome. The turn was made abruptly, with about 45 degrees of bank. Witnesses then saw the bank angle reduce, and at the same time the aircraft began to lose height. The aircraft was last seen when it was diving in a 45 degree nose down attitude. The aircraft impacted the ground near the base of the ridge. The impact angle was 58 degrees below the horizontal, with a bank angle of 118 degrees and an aircraft speed at impact of approximately 80 knots. No defects were found with the aircraft that may have contributed to the development of the accident. The wind at the time was easterly at about 35 knots, and this would have generated considerable mechanical turbulence in the vicinity of the aerodrome due to the local topography. The behaviour of the aircraft during the moments preceding impact was consistent with a stall leading to loss of control. The wind conditions, excessive bank angle, and control manipulation may have all been contributory.

Significant Factors:

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

1. The pilot was in a hurry to depart, and did not climb to a safe height before making a turn downwind in turbulent wind conditions.
2. The pilot apparently did not maintain sufficient airspeed for continued flight under the prevailing circumstances.