

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199001139**

Piper PA25-235

19 March 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.

Occurrence Number: 199001139
Location: 14 km NW of Yarram, VIC
Date: 19 March 1990
Highest Injury Level: Nil
Injuries:

Occurrence Type: Accident
Time: 1105

	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 PA25-235
Registration: VH-AHA
Serial Number: 25-4192
Operation Type: Aerial Work
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: 11 km NW of Yarram, VIC
Departure Time: 1100
Destination: 11 km NW of Yarram, VIC

Approved for Release: 9th August 1990

Circumstances:

The aircraft was spreading superphosphate when it struck a powerline at a height of about 200 feet above ground level. The aircraft struck the line with the main landing gear legs, and although the wire slid up the cutting edges, it was not severed by the cutters but snapped near a pole supporting the span. The wire then slashed around the aircraft until it cleared itself from the airframe after which the pilot discovered that he was only able to turn the aircraft to the left. He carried out an immediate forced landing. The powerline was suspended across a gully via a 470 metre span. The pilot was aware of the line having flown over it on several previous occasions. The pilot stated that, as the line was extremely difficult to see, he had been judging his clearance by reference to the poles at either end of the span. At the time of the strike the pilot's attention was distracted by difficulty in starting the superphosphate running correctly and by concentration on three other sets of wires.

Significant Factors:

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

1. The power line that the aircraft hit was very difficult to see from the aircraft.
2. The pilot's attention was distracted.