

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
199701167**

**Piper Aircraft Corp  
Pawnee Brave**

**04 April 1997**

Readers are advised that the Australian Transport Safety Bureau investigates for the sole purpose of enhancing transport safety. Consequently, Bureau reports are confined to matters of safety significance and may be misleading if used for any other purposes.

Investigations commenced on or before 30 June 2003, including the publication of reports as a result of those investigations, are authorised by the Executive Director of the Bureau in accordance with Part 2A of the Air Navigation Act 1920.

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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).**

The Bureau did not conduct an on scene investigation of this occurrence. The information presented below was obtained from information supplied to the Bureau.

**Occurrence Number:** 199701167                      **Occurrence Type:** Accident  
**Location:** 19km NNE Moree, Aerodrome  
**State:** NSW                      **Inv Category:** 4  
**Date:** Friday 04 April 1997  
**Time:** 1330 hours                      **Time Zone** EST  
**Highest Injury Level:** None

**Aircraft Manufacturer:** Piper Aircraft Corp  
**Aircraft Model:** PA-36-375  
**Aircraft Registration:** VH-JJO                      **Serial Number:** 36-7802072  
**Type of Operation:** Commercial      Aerial Agriculture - Other  
**Damage to Aircraft:** Substantial  
**Departure Point:** Sappa airstrip, NSW  
**Departure Time:** 1330 EST  
**Destination:** Sappa airstrip NSW

**Crew Details:**

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on	
		Type	Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	Senior Commercial	2519.0	12562

**Approved for Release:** Tuesday, September 16, 1997

The aircraft was involved in a cotton spraying operation. The pilot reported that on the tenth takeoff the aircraft failed to accelerate to normal climb speed, only reaching a height of about 15 ft. He dumped the load but was unable to prevent the aircraft descending into the cotton crop. Although the aircraft was substantially damaged the pilot was uninjured.

The engine subsequently performed normally during a test run. The pilot reported that he remembered strong 'willy willy' activity in the area immediately after the accident. He concluded it was likely that the takeoff performance of the aircraft had been adversely affected by a wind gust at liftoff.