

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199702305**

**Piper Aircraft Corp
Tri-Pacer**

15 July 1997

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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.

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:	199702305	Occurrence Type:	Accident
Location:	30km SE Quilpie, Aerodrome		
State:	QLD	Inv Category:	4
Date:	Tuesday 15 July 1997		
Time:	1030 hours	Time Zone	EST
Highest Injury Level:	None		

Aircraft Manufacturer:	Piper Aircraft Corp		
Aircraft Model:	PA-22-160		
Aircraft Registration:	VH-DEB	Serial Number:	22-6973
Type of Operation:	Non-commercial Aerial Application/Survey etc		
Damage to Aircraft:	Substantial		
Departure Point:	Coolbinga QLD		
Departure Time:	0745 EST		
Destination:	Greenmulla Station QLD		

Crew Details:

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on	
		Type	Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	Private	1100.0	1311

Approved for Release: Wednesday, July 30, 1997

Sequence of Events

During a flight involving stock spotting at 700 ft above ground level, the engine began to vibrate and then lost power. The pilot was able to restore power for about a minute but then was unable to maintain level flight. He landed the aircraft in a small clearing in the scrub. Shortly after touchdown, the nosewheel struck a log and the aircraft nosed over. The pilot reported that he crawled quickly away from the aircraft as fuel was leaking from the tanks.

A licenced aircraft maintenance engineer later reported that he had investigated the power loss and could not find any defects. He started and operated the engine for at least 30 minutes without fault. He ventured that carburettor icing may have been the cause of the power loss.

The Bureau of meteorology analysis of the temperatures indicate that the dewpoint was 6 degrees C and the estimate for the drybulb temperature was 15 degrees C. These conditions with 20% relative humidity are well outside the range where carburettor icing could be considered a factor.

The reason for the power loss has not been determined.