Aviation Safety Investigation Report 199602910

Piper Aircraft Corp Twin Comanche

14 September 1996

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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.

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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: 199602910 Occurrence Type: Accident

Location: Coffs Harbour, Aerodrome

State: NSW Inv Category: 4

Date: Saturday 14 September 1996

Time: 1628 hours **Time Zone** EST

Highest Injury Level: None

Aircraft Manufacturer: Piper Aircraft Corp

Aircraft Model: PA-30

Aircraft Registration: VH-RBT Serial Number: 30-476

Type of Operation: Non-commercial Pleasure/Travel

Damage to Aircraft: Substantial

Departure Point: Coffs Harbour NSW

Departure Time: 1628 EST

Destination: South Grafton NSW

Crew Details:

	Hours on		
Role	Class of Licence	Type Hou	rs Total
Pilot-In-Command	Private	8.0	330

Approved for Release: Thursday, October 3, 1996

After departure, the pilot reported that the landing gear did not retract normally and requested a low level flypast for a visual inspection. Inspection from the ground revealed that the right main wheel was turned through 90 degrees. Emergency services were requested and when they were in position the pilot elected to land on the grass strip with the landing gear retracted. The aircraft sustained substantial damage during the subsequent landing but neither of the occupants were injured.

A subsequent inspection of the aircraft revealed that the right main landing gear torque link bolt had failed and the torque links had separated. This allowed the main wheel assembly to rotate away from its normal position. The aircraft's maintenance records indicated that maintenance had recently been carried out on the right landing gear. The accident flight was the second flight following completion of that maintenance.