

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199502174**

**Piper Aircraft Corp
Aztec**

12 July 1995

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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: 199502174 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: Horn Island, Aerodrome
State: QLD **Inv Category:** 4
Date: Wednesday 12 July 1995
Time: 1652 hours **Time Zone** EST
Highest Injury Level: None

Aircraft Manufacturer: Piper Aircraft Corp
Aircraft Model: PA-23-250
Aircraft Registration: VH-BZT **Serial Number:** 27-3948
Type of Operation: Charter Passenger
Damage to Aircraft: Substantial
Departure Point: Horn Island QLD
Departure Time: 1621 EST
Destination: Moa Island QLD

Crew Details:

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on	
		Type	Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	Commercial	450.0	1300

Approved for Release: Tuesday, March 12, 1996

When the pilot lowered the landing gear the indications were that the left main gear had not extended. After several attempts at freeing the gear by recycling, the pilot decided to return to Horn Island where a ground inspection by maintenance staff was available together with emergency services. He also ascertained that the gear bulb was serviceable.

After a fly past, it was decided that the gear appeared to be down. The hydraulic system had pressurised which indicated to the pilot that the gear was most likely locked down. The pilot decided to land. On late final approach he feathered both propellers and made all switches safe. During the landing roll the left main gear collapsed rearwards to the trailing edge of the wing but the wheel continued to rotate. The wing of the aircraft did not touch the ground. All persons on board evacuated the aircraft safely.

Post flight inspection revealed that the centre drag bolt had sheared allowing the left gear to fold rearwards.

Evidence from the major defect report indicates that the bolt had failed as a result of being overstressed on a previous occasion probably as a result of an unreported heavy landing.