

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199403904**

**Piper Aircraft Corp
Twin Comanche**

25 December 1994

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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: 199403904

Occurrence Type: Accident

Location: Emu Park

State: QLD

Inv Category: 4

Date: Sunday 25 December 1994

Time: 1805 hours

Time Zone: EST

Highest Injury Level: None

Aircraft Manufacturer: Piper Aircraft Corp

Aircraft Model: PA-30

Aircraft Registration: VH-PFC

Serial Number: 30-725

Type of Operation: Non-commercial Pleasure/Travel

Damage to Aircraft: Destroyed

Departure Point: Rockhampton QLD

Departure Time: 1736 EST

Destination: Great Keppel Island QLD

Crew Details:

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on	
		Type	Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	Private	179.0	1500

Approved for Release: Wednesday, February 15, 1995

Earlier in the day, the pilot had flown his aircraft from Great Keppel Island to Rockhampton to hand-feed his cattle.

While he was completing the task storms moved into the area and rain began to fall. By the time the pilot returned to the airport the conditions were unsuitable for visual flight. He waited at the control tower for about an hour until the storms to the east of the airport cleared. He then departed and tracked via the Fitzroy River with the intention of proceeding up the the coast to the island. En route, a weather report was obtained from the island that indicated that the weather there was clear.

When the aircraft was in the Emu Park area the pilot reported that he was unable to see either the island or Yeppoon and as the weather was deteriorating, and the cloud ceiling was about 400 ft, he decided to land at Emu Park. He joined the circuit area but on the downwind leg he was unable to sight the strip markers. The pilot continued the approach and as the aircraft turned onto the base leg it entered rain. On final the pilot had difficulty seeing through the rain covered windscreen but he stated that he was able to make out the length of the strip. When the aircraft passed over the threshold of the cleared area the pilot closed the throttle and the aircraft landed. He then realised that the aircraft had landed about 10 metres to the right of the airstrip. Shortly after touchdown the aircraft ran through a depression in the ground and the landing gear and left wing and engine were torn off. The right wing was bent as the aircraft spun around before coming to rest. The cabin area remained intact and the pilot was able to evacuate the aircraft uninjured.

The pilot stated after the accident that he had considered going around during the approach but believed that weather conditions were such that he may have had difficulty maintaining flight in visual conditions.