



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SUMMARY REPORT

Publication of this report is authorised by the Secretary under the provisions of Air Navigation Regulations 283 (1)

Reference No.

SI/805/1027

1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

15 kilometres north-east of Beacon, Western Australia	Height a.m.s.l. 1100 feet	Date 6.8.80	Time (Local) 1210 hours	Zone WST
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2. THE AIRCRAFT

Type and Model Piper PA25	Registration VH-MEQ	Certificate of Airworthiness Valid from 20.6.80
Certificate of Registration issued to .	Operator .	Degree of damage to aircraft Destroyed
		Other property damaged SEC Power Line
Defects discovered Nil		

3. THE FLIGHT

Last or intended departure point Beacon	Time of departure 1130 hours	Next point of intended landing Beacon	Purpose of flight Crop Spraying	Class of operation Aerial Work
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4. THE CREW

Name	Status	Age	Class of licence	Hours on type	Total hours	Degree of injury
	Pilot	64	Commercial	Unknown	About 8200	Fatal

5. OTHER PERSONS (All passengers and persons injured on ground)

Name	Status	Degree of injury	Name	Status	Degree of injury

6. RELEVANT EVENTS

The aircraft was engaged in crop spraying operations from a property about 15 kilometres north-east of Beacon. The landing area physically conformed with the requirements of an authorized landing area, except that the approach gradients for landings into the south and east were infringed by power lines. The two-wire power line obstructing the landing approach into the south was some 30 feet above ground and 44.5 metres north of the threshold.

Prior to commencing operations, the pilot carried out an aerial inspection of the landing area and surrounding obstacles and was aware of the presence and proximity of the two power lines. The pilot refuelled aircraft and loaded the hopper with insecticide which comprised the chemical 24D in diesel. No contamination of the equipment used to refuel the aircraft, or of the stocks from which the aircraft was refuelled, was detected.

The aircraft was returning from its first spraying sortie and was approaching to land into the south when it struck the two-wire power line which was suspended across the approach path. No cable cutters were fitted to the aircraft and, after striking and stretching the two cables, the aircraft struck the ground in a vertical attitude at the threshold of the strip. It then toppled over onto its back and fire broke out. The pilot released himself from his harness and was crawling clear when he was overcome by the flames.

The weather at the time was fine. The wind was calm and there is no evidence that weather was a factor in the accident. Examination of the wreckage did not reveal any defect or malfunction which could have contributed to the accident.

7. OPINION AS TO CAUSE

The probable cause of the accident was that the pilot failed to see and avoid high tension power lines which were suspended across the final approach path.

Approved for publication

(G. V. Hughes)
Delegate of the Secretary

Date

8.1.1981

DEFINITIONS

ACCIDENT - An occurrence associated with the operation of an aircraft which takes place between the time any person boards the aircraft with the intention of flight until such time as all those persons have disembarked and in which

- (a) any person suffers death or serious injury as a result of being in or upon the aircraft or by direct contact with the aircraft or anything attached to the aircraft; or

Note. - Specifically excluded are: death from natural causes and fatal or serious injury to any person on board whether self-inflicted or inflicted by another person, or to ground support personnel before or after flight, or fatal or serious injury which is not a direct result of the operation of the aircraft, or which concerns stowaways.

- (b) the aircraft suffers substantial damage or is destroyed; or
- (c) the aircraft is missing or is completely inaccessible.

FATAL INJURY - Any injury which results in death within 30 days.

SERIOUS INJURY - Any injury other than a fatal injury which

- (a) requires hospitalisation for more than 48 hours, commencing within seven days from the date the injury was received; or
- (b) results in a fracture of any bone (except simple fractures of fingers, toes or nose); or
- (c) involves lacerations which cause severe haemorrhages, nerve, muscle or tendon damage; or
- (d) involves injury to any internal organ; or
- (e) involves second or third degree burns, or any burns affecting more than five percent of the body surface.

MINOR INJURY - Any injury other than as defined under "Fatal Injury" or "Serious Injury".

DESTROYED - Consumed by fire, demolished or damaged beyond repair.

SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE - Damage or structural failure which adversely affects the structural strength, performance or flight characteristics of the aircraft and which would normally require major repair or replacement of the affected component. The following types of damage are specifically excluded: engine failure; damage limited to an engine or its accessories, or to propeller blades; bent fairings or cowlings; small dents or puncture holes in the skin; damage to wing tips, antennas, tires, or brakes.

MINOR DAMAGE - Damage other than as defined under "Destroyed" or "Substantial Damage".