

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
199302017**

**Piper Aircraft Corp  
Navajo**

**09 July 1993**

Readers are advised that the Australian Transport Safety Bureau investigates for the sole purpose of enhancing transport safety. Consequently, Bureau reports are confined to matters of safety significance and may be misleading if used for any other purposes.

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](http://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:** 199302017      **Occurrence Type:** Accident  
**Location:** Oodnadatta  
**State:** SA      **Inv Category:** 4  
**Date:** Friday 09 July 1993  
**Time:** 1410 hours      **Time Zone:** CST  
**Highest Injury Level:** None

**Aircraft Manufacturer:** Piper Aircraft Corp  
**Aircraft Model:** PA-31  
**Aircraft Registration:** VH-NNN      **Serial Number:** 31-8112038  
**Type of Operation:** Non-commercial Pleasure/Travel  
**Damage to Aircraft:** Substantial  
**Departure Point:** Oodnadatta SA  
**Departure Time:** 1434 CST  
**Destination:** Noccundra SA

**Crew Details:**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Class of Licence</b>	<b>Hours on Type</b>	<b>Hours Total</b>
Pilot-In-Command	Private	60.0	750

**Approved for Release:** Friday, March 11, 1994

The aircraft departed Oodnadatta with 6 persons onboard. About 15 minutes into the flight, as it reached top of climb at 7000 feet, the fuel pressure to the right hand engine decreased and the engine back-fired. The pilot turned the fuel boost pump on but the engine failed to respond. The propeller was feathered. The aircraft was unable to maintain altitude and the pilot decided to return to Oodnadatta and advised Flight Service of his intentions.

The landing at Oodnadatta had to be made on runway 13 as the other runway was closed due to soft, wet surface. Runway 13 had a crosswind component of about 15 knots at the time and the pilot experienced some difficulty in aligning the aircraft with the runway on final approach. Suffering from some apprehension, and concentrating on the approach and landing, the pilot neglected to extend the landing gear.