



Ref: 7859

SOUTH AFRICAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY**ACCIDENT REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Aircraft Registration	ZS-NYC	Date of Accident	12/9/2004	Time of Accident	±1800Z
Type of Aircraft	PIPER PA 34-200T		Type of Operation	Private	
Pilot-in-command License Type	Commercial	Age	24	License Valid	Yes
Pilot-in-command Flying Experience	Total Flying Hours	1 064.0	Hours on Type	354.3	
Last point of departure	Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport (FAKN)				
Next point of intended landing	Piet Retief Aerodrome (FAPF)				
Location of the accident site with reference to easily defined geographical points (GPS readings if possible)					
Runway 15 – Piet Retief Aerodrome					
Meteorological Information	Fine: Wind was light and variable from the South, Temperature +20°C, CAVOK				
Number of people on board	1 + 5	No. of people injured	Nil	No. of people killed	Nil
Synopsis	<p>According to air traffic control (ATC) at FAKN the aircraft landed at their facility at 1652Z on an inbound flight from Inhambane in Mozambique with six occupants onboard. After landing the aircraft uplifted 360 liters of Avgas (fuel) according to available records and all occupants cleared customs.</p> <p>Emergency personnel as well as the fuel attendant recorded the aircraft again departing their facility at 1720Z for a flight to Piet Retief, which is a licensed unmanned aerodrome with no active runway lights. At the time of departure from FAKN the control tower had already closed down for active duty (1700Z).</p> <p>An arrangement was made by the pilot that two vehicles would be parked at the threshold of Runway 15 at FAPF awaiting the aircraft with their headlamps illuminating the runway. The pilot perceived his approach to be quite high at the time and he increased his rate of descent accordingly. On final approach the pilot experienced what he described as a lack of runway perspective due the insufficient lighting and the absence of natural light (moonlight). His intention was to fly low over the vehicles to maximize the use of their lights but realized too late that his approach was too steep. In an attempt to flare the aircraft he exceeded the elevator control range and collided with the roof of one of the vehicles (Pajero) at ±80 knots.</p> <p>It would appear that the impact severed the nose gear assembly resulting in a wheels-up landing on Runway 15. The aircraft skidded along the runway for approximately 70m and then turned sideways, coming to a halt on the runway. The aircraft was substantially damaged. Nobody was injured in the event.</p>				
Probable Cause					
<p>During an attempt to land on an unlit runway at night the aircraft collided with a vehicle on short final approach, which severed the nose landing gear assembly from the aircraft and resulted in a wheels-up landing on the runway.</p>					

