

**INCIDENT**

**Aircraft Type and Registration:** Piper PA-28-181 Cherokee Archer II, G-NERI

**No & Type of Engines:** 1 Lycoming O-360-A4M piston engine

**Year of Manufacture:** 1978

**Date & Time (UTC):** 17 February 1995 at 1510 hrs

**Location:** Aberdeen (Dyce) Airport

**Type of Flight:** Private

**Persons on Board:** Crew - 1                      Passengers - 2

**Injuries:** Crew - None                      Passengers - None

**Nature of Damage:** None

**Commander's Licence:** Private Pilot's Licence

**Commander's Age:** 41 years

**Commander's Flying Experience:** 240 hours (of which 8 were on type)  
Last 90 days - 8 hours

**Information Source:** Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft departed Wick at 1355 hrs for its VFR return flight to Aberdeen. The forecast weather for the route predicted a light northwesterly wind with good visibility, no significant weather, scattered cloud at 1,800 feet and a surface temperature of +5°C. The pilot reported that the weather on the route was not quite as forecast as he encountered heavy showers northwest of Aberdeen with scattered cloud above 2,000 feet.

As the aircraft approached Aberdeen the aerodrome controller instructed the pilot to join downwind left-hand for Runway 34. The pilot routed towards the downwind position and started his pre-landing checks. Partway through the checks, after he had switched on the electric fuel pump, the pilot was distracted by sight of a helicopter that would possibly have conflicted with his approach. When the pilot was able to return to his checks he omitted to check the fuel contents. As the aircraft turned final the engine RPM dropped and the fuel pressure began to fluctuate. The pilot recycled the electric pump

and managed to restore fuel pressure but for only 3 seconds. As the aircraft was now established on finals the pilot decided to declare a 'MAYDAY' and continue the approach. After a successful glide approach and landing the pilot noticed a low fuel state on the selected fuel tank.

The pilot reported that he had been distracted en route when negotiating adverse weather and, during the approach, by conflicting traffic. These distractions had interrupted his normal cockpit scanning and checking routine with regard to fuel tank selections.