

No: 5/85

Ref: EW/G85/04/02

**Aircraft type and registration:** Piper PA 28—161 G-BFDK (light single engined fixed wing aircraft)

**Year of Manufacture:** 1977

**Date and time (GMT):** 2 April 1985 at 1515 hrs

**Location:** Thornborough, Buckingham

**Type of flight:** Training

**Persons on board:** Crew — 1                  Passengers — None

**Injuries:** Crew — None                  Passengers — None

**Nature of damage:** Severe, damaged beyond economic repair

**Commander's Licence:** Student Pilot

**Commander's Age:** 22 years

**Commander's total flying experience:** 28 hours (all of which were on type)

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

The student pilot had carried out two practice forced landing exercises without incident and he was descending through 2000 feet on his third, when he smelled strong acrid fumes which he thought were coming from the engine. He opened the DV panel to ventilate the aircraft and put on full power to climb away. The fumes persisted, so he closed the throttle and began an emergency descent. He elected to make a forced landing as he feared that he would be overcome by the fumes. His touchdown speed was high and he bounced before settling again on nose and port main wheels. The aircraft overran the selected field, crashed through a hedge and came to rest in a minor road after having turned through 180°.

A technical investigation revealed no defect that could have caused the fumes described by the pilot. However, there is a brickworks 6 NM upwind of the crash area and the pilot may well have smelled fumes emanating from the works. He was not flying in the normal training area as at that time a large purple airspace occupied much of the area.