

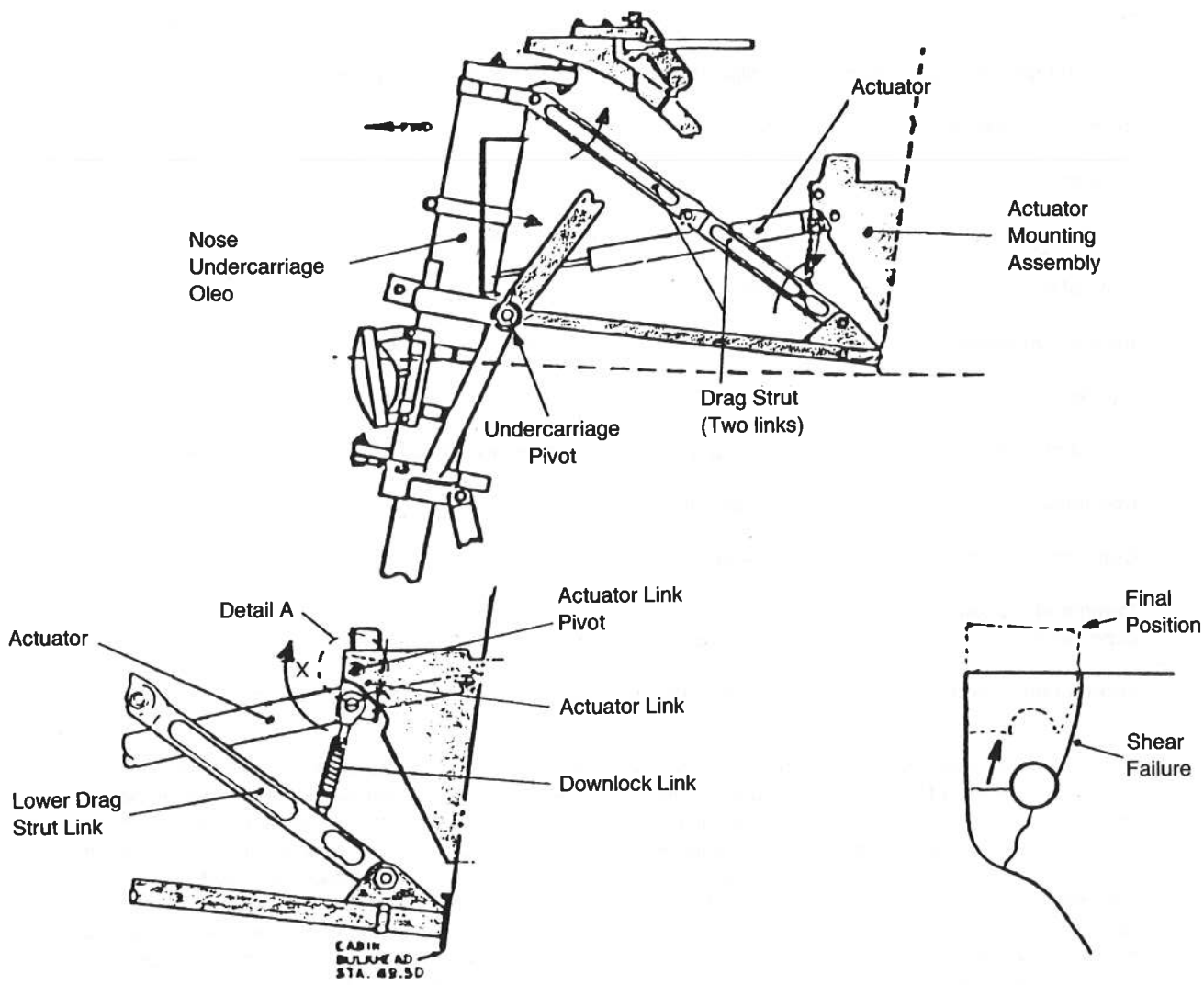
Aircraft type and registration:	Piper PA 34—200 Seneca G-BETT (light fixed wing twin engined aircraft)	
Year of Manufacture:	1972	
Date and time (GMT):	11 September 1984 at 0845 hrs	
Location:	Headcorn Aerodrome, Kent	
Type of flight:	Aerial Photography	
Persons on board:	Crew — 1	Passengers — 1
Injuries:	Crew — None	Passengers — None
Nature of damage:	Both propellers damaged and engines shock loaded, distortion of nose undercarriage bay structure.	
Commander's Licence:	Commercial Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	30 years	
Commander's total flying experience:	2230 hours (of which 70 were on type)	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot.	

After having been satisfied with the condition of the aircraft on a preflight check, the pilot started both engines, taxied to the holding point and completed the power checks without incident. During pre take-off checks the green indicator light for the undercarriage and the selector lever in the undercarriage down position were specifically observed.

After taxiing onto the runway full power was applied without any application of brakes but after accelerating for 30 to 50 metres, the aircraft's nose sank to the ground. The engines were then shut down and the aircraft made safe.

Examination showed that the nose undercarriage actuator mounting assembly had sheared vertically upwards from the actuator link pivot bolt hole, (refer to Figure 1) and the downlock link had been bent. The forces required to cause these failures can only have resulted from the folding of the drag strut with the actuator and its link in the locked down position.

It was not possible to determine the reason for this having occurred. Piper Service Bulletin No 413 of 16 April 1974 draws attention to the potential for inadvertent nose gear retraction in a hard landing and calls for a dimensional check on the drag strut overcentring.



Arrow X — Denotes direction of rotation of actuator link on normal retraction

Detail A

FIG.1