

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199602871**

**Piper Aircraft Corp
Chieftain
Partenavia Costruzioni Aeronautiche
SPA
P.68B**

09 September 1996

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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.

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: 199602871 **Occurrence Type:** Incident
Location: Natya, VOR
State: VIC **Inv Category:** 4
Date: Monday 09 September 1996
Time: 1552 hours **Time Zone** EST
Highest Injury Level: None

Aircraft Manufacturer: Piper Aircraft Corp
Aircraft Model: PA-31-350
Aircraft Registration: VH-RUH **Serial Number:** 31-7752064
Type of Operation:
Damage to Aircraft: Nil
Departure Point: Broken Hill NSW
Departure Time: 1446 EST
Destination: Moorabbin Vic

Aircraft Manufacturer: Partenavia Costruzioni Aeronautiche SPA
Aircraft Model: P.68B
Aircraft Registration: VH-LJR **Serial Number:** 41
Type of Operation:
Damage to Aircraft: Nil
Departure Point: White Cliffs NSW
Departure Time: 1411 EST
Destination: Essendon Vic

Approved for Release: Monday, October 21, 1996

At 1550 VH-RUH, enroute Broken Hill to Moorabbin, reported overhead Natya at 7,000 ft. At 1552 VH-LJR, enroute White Cliffs to Essendon, reported overhead Natya, also at 7,000 ft. The Flight Service (FS) 14 operator was expecting LJR to be at its planned level of 5,000 ft. Neither aircraft was aware of the other and traffic information was immediatly passed.

Investigation revealed that the pilot of LJR requested traffic for a climb to 7000 ft 16 minutes after departure from White Cliffs. That request was to the FS15 operator. Nine minutes after that request the pilot of LJR reported maintaining 7,000 ft. Departure co-ordination from FS15 to FS14 was done manually because the operators were too busy on their frequencies to do it by intercom. The investigation was unable to determine whether the level change was co-ordinated as part of the departure co-ordination.

The pilot of LJR called FS14 at 1510 (42 minutes before he reported over Natya) and reported maintaining 7,000 ft and an amended estimate for Natya. The FS14 operator did not realise that LJR was no longer at its planned level and the FS14 flight strip still indicated 5,000 ft. When the aircraft later reported at Natya, there was a different operator working the FS14 position. He immediately noticed the aircraft was not at its planned level of 5,000 ft which was still annotated on the flight strip.

Both FS15 and FS14 were very busy at the time. FS15 was dual manned and in addition to normal traffic was handling a difficult distress phase which extended over a protracted period.

