TOTAL POWER LOSS - CESSNA 208 AIRCRAFT

A Cessna Aircraft 208 (VH-UMV) was engaged in parachuting operations from Cairns Airport, Queensland on 31st December 2009. While climbing through 12,500 ft in preparation for a parachute drop, the engine failed. The parachutists exited the aircraft and the pilot completed a glide approach and uneventful landing at Cairns Airport.

The failure of the Pratt and Whitney PT6A-114 engine was probably precipitated by fracture of the compressor turbine blades.

As a result of this occurrence, the (Australian) Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) released Airworthiness Bulletin AWB 72-005, alerting all operators and maintainers of PT6A engines, of the potential for installation of these compressor turbine blades in unapproved PT6A engine variants, and to raise awareness of the restrictions placed on the use of approved after-market blades.