



PRELIMINARY REPORT

AIC 23 - 1002

Helifix Operations Ltd

P2-HFA

Cessna 208B Grand Caravan

Runway Excursion During Landing

Eliptamin Airstrip,

Sandaun Province

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

10 February 2023



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ABOUT THE AIC

The Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) is an independent statutory agency within Papua New Guinea (PNG). The AIC is governed by a Commission and is entirely separate from the judiciary, transport regulators, policy makers and service providers. The AIC's function is to improve safety and public confidence in the aviation mode of transport through excellence in: independent investigation of aviation accidents and other safety occurrences within the aviation system; safety data recording and analysis; and fostering safety awareness, knowledge and action.

The AIC is responsible for investigating accidents and other transport safety matters involving civil aviation, in PNG, as well as participating in overseas investigations involving PNG registered aircraft.

A primary concern is the safety of commercial transport, with regard to fare-paying passenger operations.

The AIC performs its functions in accordance with the provisions of the PNG Civil Aviation Act 2000 (as amended), and the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1951 and Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

The object of a safety investigation is to identify and reduce safety-related risk. AIC investigations determine and communicate the safety factors related to the transport safety matter being investigated.

On 10 February 2023 at 15:19 local time (05:19 UTC), the AIC was notified by Helifix Operations Ltd about an occurrence which had occurred on the same day at 13:43:28 local time (3:43:28 UTC). The occurrence involved a Cessna 208B Grand Caravan aircraft owned and operated by Helifix Operations Ltd. The AIC immediately began gathering information pertinent to the occurrence and commenced the investigation. A team of investigators were dispatched to perform on-site activities the following day.

This Preliminary Aircraft Accident Investigation Report was produced by the AIC, and contains facts known to the AIC before the official release date. It is released by the Commission in accordance with Paragraph 7.1 of ICAO Annex 13. The report is also publicly available on the AIC website: <https://www.aic.gov.pg/index.php/investigation>.

The report is based on the initial investigation carried out by the AIC in accordance with Papua New Guinea Civil Aviation Act 2000 (as amended), Chapter 31 of the Commissions of Inquiry Act, Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, and the PNG AIC Investigation Policy and Procedures Manual. It contains factual information. Analysis of that information, findings and contributing (causal) factors, other factors, safety actions, and safety recommendations are reserved for the Final Report.

The sole objective of the investigation and the Preliminary Report is the AIC's obligation to the Convention on International Civil Aviation and in accordance with ICAO Annex 13, and thereby promote aviation safety. (Reference: ICAO Annex 13, Chapter 7). Readers are advised that in accordance with Section 219 of the Civil Aviation Act 2000 (as amended) and Annex 13, it is not the purpose of the Commission's aircraft accident investigation to apportion blame or liability. Fact based statements in the report should not be interpreted as apportioning blame.

Consequently, AIC reports are confined to matters of safety significance and may be misleading if used for any other purpose.



Captain Aria Bouraga, MBE.

Acting Chief Commissioner

12 March 2023

Occurrence details

On 10 February 2023, at about 13:43:28 local, (03:43:48 UTC ¹) a Cessna 208B Grand Caravan aircraft, registered P2-HFA, owned and operated by Helifix Operations Ltd, was conducting VFR² charter flight from Kiunga Airport, Western Province to Eliptamin Airstrip, Sandaun Province, Papua New Guinea, when, during landing roll at Eliptamin, impacted a drainage embankment which runs along the end of the airstrip.

There were 4 persons on board: the pilot and three passengers.

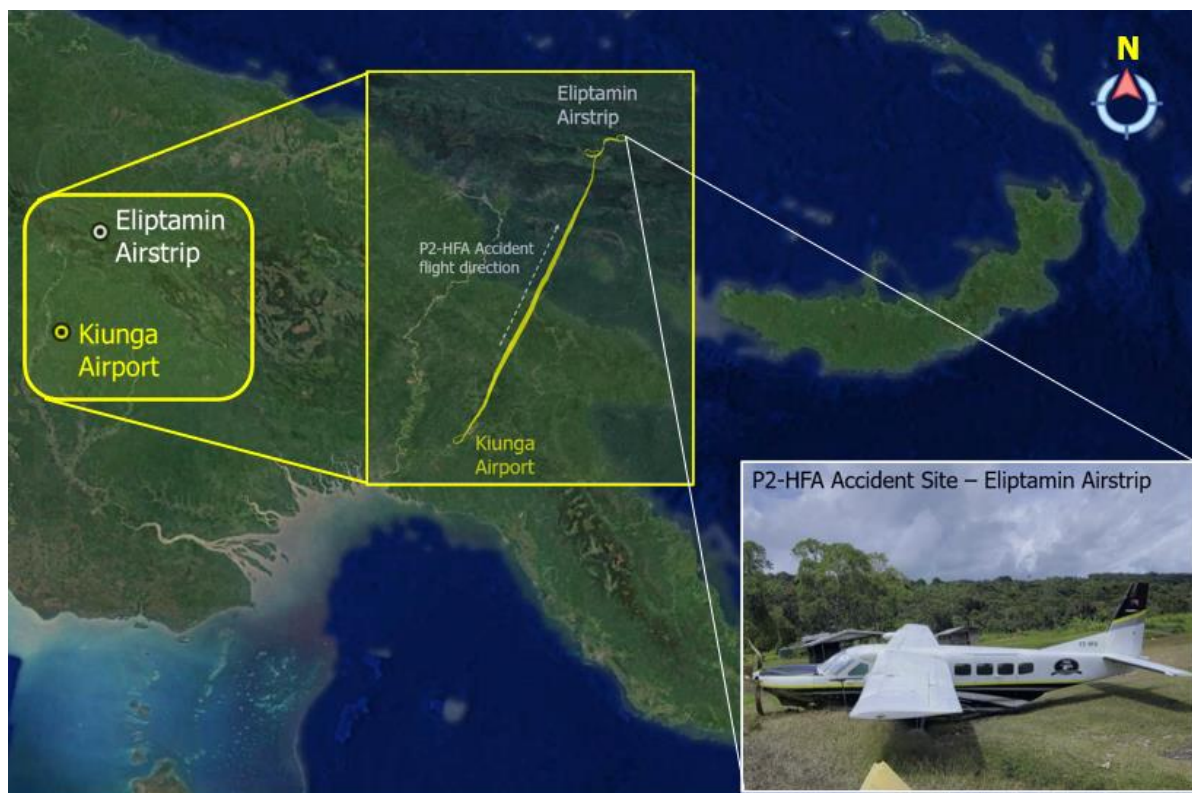


Figure 1. Depiction of P2-HFA flight path.

According to the Appareo recorded data, at 13:07 the aircraft departed from Kiunga Airport, climbed to an altitude of 1,847 ft AGL³ and began tracking Northeast for Eliptamin. The pilot reported the estimated time of arrival at Eliptamin to be in 34 minutes.

During an interview with the AIC, the pilot stated that there was no significant weather along the route and in the Eliptamin area when he arrived. The recorded data shows that at 13:41 local time while descending through about 2,500 ft AGL, the aircraft turned left and began tracking towards the Northwest, downwind. The aircraft then tracked Northwest and made a base turn for final (*see Figure 2*).

ATC records show that the pilot contacted ATC at 13:40, while in the Eliptamin circuit area and cancelled SARWATCH⁴.

¹ The 24-hour clock, in Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), is used in this report to describe the local time as specific events occurred. Local time in the area of the accident, Papua New Guinea Time (Pacific/Port Moresby Time) is UTC +10 hours

² Visual Flight Rules: Those rules as prescribed by national authority for visual flight, with corresponding relaxed requirements for flight instruments (Source: The Cambridge Aerospace Dictionary)

³ Above Ground level (AGL). All altitude data obtained from the Appareo recorded data are referenced to the Eliptamin Airstrip threshold elevation of 4,739 ft

⁴ Search and Rescue Watch; Monitoring of a flight to activate emergency services if not cancelled by a specific time.

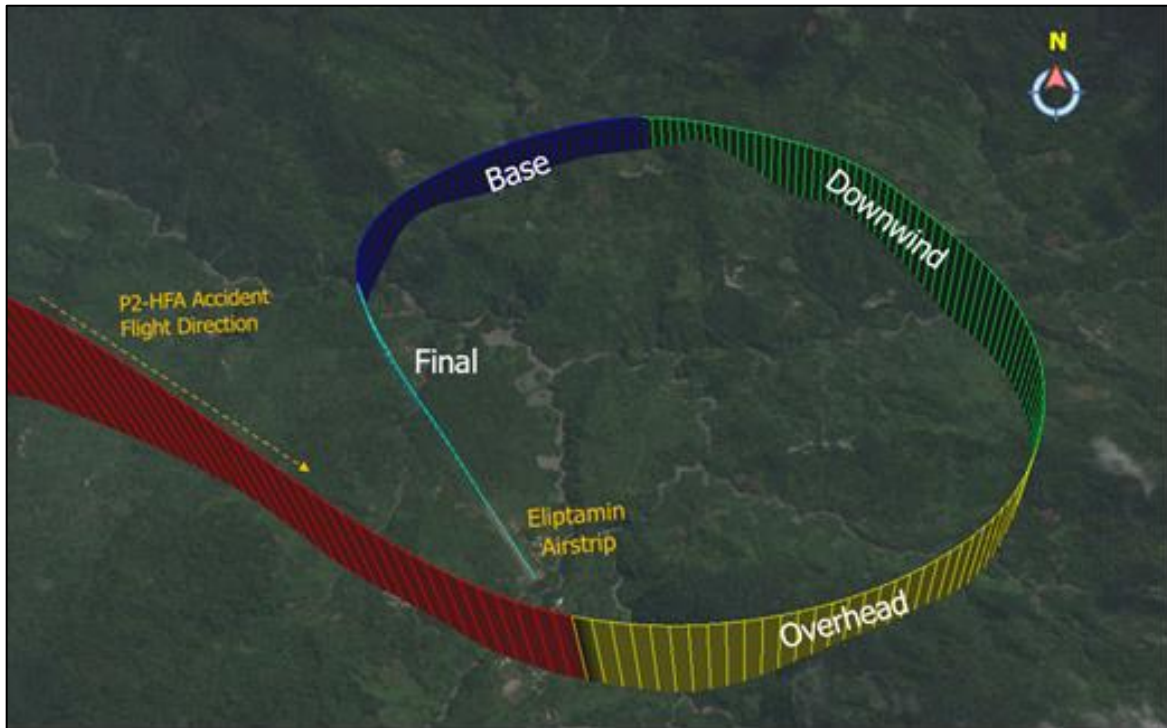


Figure 2. Circuit area at Eiptamin

The pilot stated that before entering the final approach, he extended full flap and maintained a speed of about 90 knots. The wind within the circuit area was calm.

During the final approach, he started feeling wind gusts against the aircraft. The pilot stated that at that stage, he had passed the committal point. He, therefore, committed and continued to land. The aircraft touch down time as recorded was 13:43:12 (local).

The pilot stated that subsequent to landing, he set pitch to reverse during the landing roll and left the aircraft in the configuration in landing configuration during the roll.

The pilot stated that immediately after touchdown, the aircraft became airborne. The aircraft settled back onto the ground again. As the aircraft continued its roll, the aircraft became airborne again. Shortly after settling onto the ground the second time, the aircraft rolled off the end of the airstrip. The aircraft subsequently impacted the embankment of a drain which runs along the edge of the airstrip.

The aircraft came to rest upon impact. The pilot subsequently shut down the engine instructed the passengers to follow him out of the left cockpit door. The pilot then assisted away to a reasonable distance from the aircraft.

There were no injuries reported.

The aircraft was substantially damaged. The aircraft nose landing gear collapsed, and the aircraft propeller blades were substantially bent (see Figure 3).

The PIC called ATC 14:03 at and notified them about the accident.



Figure 3. Overview of damage sustained to the aircraft.

AIC Comment

The investigation is continuing. A full report will be published upon completion.

The investigation analysis and findings will be included in the Final Report.

Safety Actions

At the time of the issue of this Preliminary report, no Safety Actions have been reported.

Recommendations

At the time of the issue of this Preliminary report, no Safety Recommendations have been issued by the AIC.

General Details

Date and time:	10 February 2023, 13:45 (local)	
Occurrence category:	Accident	
Primary occurrence type:	Runway excursion during landing	
Location:	Eliptamin Airstrip, Sandaun Province	
	Latitude: 5° 2'34.20"S	Longitude: 141°40'44.95"E
	Elevation: 4,739 ft	Runway Length: 594 m
	Airstrip type: One-way Landing & Taking off.	Average Overall slope: 7.2%

Crew details

Nationality	Papua New Guinean
Gender	Male
Age	51
Licence type	CPLA
Total hours	14,000
Total hours in Command	9,334.8
Total hours on type	1,998.2

Aircraft Details

Aircraft manufacturer and model:	Textron Aviation, C208B	
Registration:	P2- HFA	
Serial number:	208B0954	
Engine manufacturer and model	Honeywell, TPE 331	
Engine serial number	123145	
Type of operation:	Charter flight	
Persons on board:	Crew: 1 Pilot	Passengers: 3
Injuries:	Crew: Nil	Passengers: Nil
Damage	Substantial damage to nose landing gear and Propeller blades	