



PRELIMINARY REPORT

AIC 17-1001

Niugini Helicopters

P2-HSE

Bell Helicopter 407

Helicopter impacted aerodrome apron during takeoff

Kiunga Aerodrome, Western Province

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

15 February 2017

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 particular 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 in accordance with 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.

It is not a function of the AIC to apportion blame or determine liability. At the same time, an investigation report must include factual material of sufficient weight to support the analysis and findings. At all times the AIC endeavours to balance the use of material that could imply adverse comment with the need to properly explain what happened, and why it happened, in a fair and unbiased manner.

About this report

Decisions regarding whether to conduct an investigation, and the scope of an investigation, were based on many factors, including the level of safety benefit likely to be obtained from the investigation. For this occurrence, a full on-site, fact-gathering investigation was commenced. As the helicopter was destroyed the occurrence was classified as an accident. This Preliminary Summary Report has been produced in accordance with the PNG Civil Aviation Act 2000 (as amended), ICAO Annex 13 to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, and the PNG Accident Investigation Commission's Policy and Procedures.

Helicopter impacted aerodrome apron during takeoff

Occurrence details

On 15 February 2017, at approximately 05:00 UTC¹ (15:00 local), the pilot of a Bell 407 helicopter, registered P2- HSE, owned and operated by Niugini Helicopters Ltd, was commencing a normal translational-lift takeoff, to the south, across the aerodrome apron, and over the terminal buildings. The flight was a VFR² charter operation carrying two passengers to a Digicel tower site, 20 nm due south of Kiunga Aerodrome.

The pilot reported that when the helicopter was about 50 ft AGL and at a speed (IAS)³ between 30-40 kts, it suddenly jerked to the left, spiraled left, and impacted the tarmac, and was destroyed. The pilot and both passenger sustained minor injuries. A significant quantity of fuel spilled from one drum during the impact. There was no significant damage to aerodrome infrastructure.

A 50 m longline, attached to a net carrying three full 200 L metal drums containing diesel fuel, was ‘attached’⁴ to the helicopter.

During the interview with the pilot, he stated that he was unaware that the longline that he and the passengers had prepared for the next flight to the same location, was attached to the helicopter prior to lift-off.

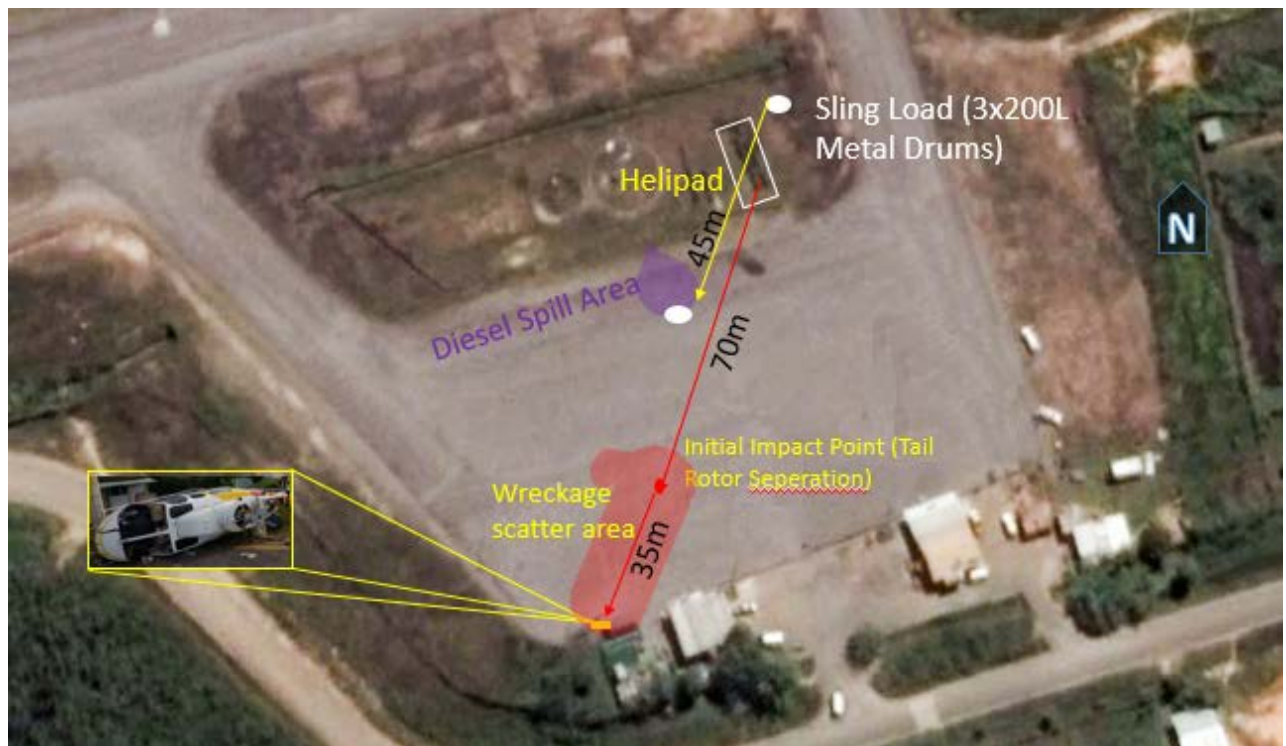


Figure 1: Aerial view of occurrence area

The investigation determined that the tail boom separated at the initial impact area on the tarmac. The fuselage came to rest against the railing around the light pole at the southern end of the tarmac, 35 m from the point where initial impact marks were found, 105 m from the helipad (See Figure 1).

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

³ Indicated Air Speed

⁴ The method of attachment is subject to further engineering examination and analysis.



Figure 2: Final position of fuselage



Figure 3: Helicopter Belly



Figure 4: Separated landing gear skid assembly



Figure 4: Fuel spill on the aerodrome apron

AIC comment

The investigation is continuing.

General Details

Date and time	15 February 2017 — 05:00 UTC approximately	
Occurrence category	Accident	
Primary occurrence type	Impacted aerodrome apron during takeoff	
Location	Kiunga Aerodrome, Western Province	
	Latitude: 6° 7'32.82"S	Longitude: 141° 17'6.67"E

Crew details

Nationality	New Zealand
Licence type	CPL (H)
Licence number	P20495
Total hours	5, 800.0 hours
Total hours on type	644.0 hours
Total hours last 30 days	13.9 hours

Aircraft Details

Aircraft manufacturer and model	Bell 407 Helicopter	
Registration	P2-HSE	
Serial number	53257	
TTIS	4 193.3hrs	
Engine		
Engine manufacturer and model	Rolls Royce Corporation 250-C47B	
Engine serial number	CAE-847280	
Type of operation	Charter	
Persons on board	Crew: 1	Passengers: 2
Injuries	Crew: 1 (minor)	Passengers: 2 (minor)
Damage	Destroyed	

Approved


David Inau, ML
Chief Executive Officer
Accident Investigation Commission

10 March 2017