

## MEDIA RELEASE

---

### **PNG ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMISSION RELEASES FINAL REPORT ON AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT OCCURRED NEAR PAPA-LEALEA, CENTRAL PROVINCE**

The Chief Commissioner of the PNG Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) Mr. Hubert Namani today announced that the AIC released the Final Report on the investigation of an aircraft accident occurred on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2020 near Papa-Lealea, Central Province.

Mr. Namani explained that *"On 26 July 2020, at 12:46 local time, a Cessna 402C aircraft, registered VH-TSI collided with trees during an aborted take-off at an uncommissioned field near Papa-Lealea, about 16 nm North-West of Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea."*

The AIC became aware of the occurrence later the same day and assigned a team of investigators to gather information and to conduct on-site activities. In compliance with its mandate under the Civil Aviation Act 2000 (As Amended) and aligned with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, the AIC conducted a safety investigation on the accident with complete independence from other State authorities, service providers and aviation stakeholders, to determine the cause and circumstances of the accident with a view of preventing similar occurrences in the future, rather than to ascribe blame or liability.

*"The pilot stated that he departed at 09:30 that day from Mareeba Airport, Queensland Australia and tracked towards the uncommissioned field near Papa-Lealea. As the aircraft approached to land, the outboard section of the left wing was clipped by a tree and separated from the aircraft and the pilot continued on with the approach and landed at about 12:20. Once landed, the aircraft was refuelled with jerrycans full of fuel (AvGas) and loaded with cargo by persons waiting on the ground."*

*"The pilot reported that at about 12:40, he lined up and commenced the take-off roll from the Southern end of the field. As the aircraft lifted off, he noticed that the airspeed indicator was not working, and that the aircraft was not achieving a positive rate of climb."*

In its Final Report, the AIC did not discard overweight, balance or centre of gravity issues due to improper loading or restraint of the cargo as factors contributing to the inability of the aircraft to obtain a positive rate of climb during take-off.

The AIC also stated that the separation of the outboard section of the left wing, clipped by a tree during the approach to land phase, affected the ability of the left wing to produce lift.

Mr. Namani explained that *"The pilot manoeuvred the aircraft back towards the ground and touched down about 400 m before the end of the field, distance that was not enough for the aircraft to come to a stop, continuing its landing roll into the bushes and impacting trees until it got to its final position."*

The pilot stated to the AIC that he was the sole occupant of the aircraft and sustained minor injuries as a result of the occurrence. The aircraft was substantially damaged. The investigation confirmed that the fire to the left wing and engine was a deliberate post-accident event.

The AIC determined that the aircraft was not airworthy at the time of the accident and was unserviceable for the conduct of the flight. The investigation also determined that there was no proper document control to conduct timely scheduled maintenance and that there was no record of a certificate of airworthiness at the time of the accident.

The Final Report of the investigation is available on AIC's website [www.aic.gov.pg](http://www.aic.gov.pg)