

MEDIA RELEASE

PNG ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMISSION RELEASES FINAL REPORT ON AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT OCCURRED AT YENKISA AIRSTRIP, ENGA PROVINCE

The Chief Commissioner of the PNG Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) Mr. Hubert Namani, today announced that the AIC publicly released the Final Report on the investigation conducted with regard to a Cessna 208 aircraft accident occurred on 19th March 2020 at Yenkisa Airstrip, Enga Province.

Mr. Namani explained that *“On 19 March 2020, at 13:10 local time, a Cessna 208 Caravan aircraft, registered P2-MAF, owned and operated by Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) PNG Limited, conducting a non-scheduled passenger flight operation from Kompiam to Yenkisa, Enga Province, experienced a runway excursion accident during its landing roll at Yenkisa Airstrip. Four persons were on board the aircraft at the time of the accident; one pilot and three passengers. There were no reported injuries.”*

The AIC received a notification of the accident from the air operator on the same day and immediately commenced an investigation in accordance with its mandate under the Civil Aviation Act 2000 (As Amended) and aligned with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, with complete independence from State authorities including the Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG (CASA PNG), aviation service providers and stakeholders.

The Final Report produced by the AIC as a result of the investigation into the accident stated that during final approach into Yenkisa Airstrip, the pilot was affected by a visual illusion due to the upslope strip. As a result of it, the pilot flew the final approach too low and, as the aircraft got closer to strip 31, he realised that he was coming too close to a tree along the approach path and focused his attention on clearing the tree, losing his aiming point.

Mr Namani explained that *“the investigation found that there were trees close to the edge of the airstrip that were penetrating its Obstacle Limitation Surface. A previous survey conducted by Rural Airstrip Agency identified the presence of trees protruding in the area, however, no effective action was taken before the date of the accident to cut them.”*

The investigation also found that subsequent to clearing the tree, a combination of elements including overshooting the aiming point, excess energy during flare, not using reverse thrust and a wet surface of the strip led the aircraft to overran the airstrip during landing roll, hitting a mound of clay and rocks before tipping left into a gully where the aircraft came to a stop.

The Final Report of the investigation is available on AIC's website www.aic.gov.pg