

MEDIA RELEASE

PNG AIC RELEASES PRELIMINARY REPORT ON HELI SOLUTIONS BELL 407 INFLIGHT LOSS OF TAIL ROTOR ACCIDENT

The Acting Board Chairman of the PNG Accident Investigation Commission (AIC), Captain Aria Bouraga, MBE, today announced the public release of the Preliminary Report, AIC 23-1003, related to the Heli Solutions Ltd Bell 407 helicopter registered P2-HSM, which had a complete loss of tail rotor thrust inflight resulting in an emergency landing about 3.5 nautical miles (NM) Northwest of Wapenamanda Airport, Enga Province, PNG on 18 February 2023, at about 11:40 local time (01:40 UTC).



Captain Bouraga explained, *“it is the policy of the AIC to publicly release a preliminary investigation report for each accident or serious incident being investigated within 30 days from the occurrence date pursuant to requirements of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.”*

At this stage, the AIC has established that the tail rotor shaft connected to the tail rotor gearbox detached from the helicopter inflight. The pilot immediately carried out an emergency landing in a garden belonging to the locals about 3.5 nautical miles (NM) Northwest of Wapenamanda Airport. The pilot shut down the engine and the loadmaster evacuated the passengers. The helicopter sustained significant damage to its tail rotor assembly and shaft. It was reported that none of the persons onboard sustained injury during the accident and subsequent evacuation.

The AIC is in the process of analyzing and verifying information and evidence relevant to the investigation which include flight operation, aircraft systems, airworthiness and serviceability, performance, organisational aspects, weather, etc. All relevant information will be published in the final investigation report. The AIC investigation will determine the circumstances and contributing factors to ensure all safety lessons which can help improve aviation safety are learned. In accordance with its legal mandate, all AIC investigations are conducted with the sole purpose of improving safety for the traveling public, with complete independence from other State authorities, aviation service providers, and stakeholders. AIC investigations do not apportion blame or liability to any person or organization.

More information about this investigation can be found at www.aic.gov.pg