



## OFFICE OF THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER

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**Safety recommendation: AIC 20-R09/19-1001**

**Addressed to: Niugini Helicopters**

**Date issued: 12 August 2020**

**Investigation link: AIC 19-1001**

**Action status: Active**

### Introduction

On 11 August 2019, the PNG AIC was informed by Papua New Guinea Air Services Limited (ASL) of an accident involving a Bell 427 helicopter, registered P2-HSG, owned and operated by Niugini Helicopters.

On the same day, PNG instituted an investigation into the occurrence by initially authorising the commencement of the investigation, and the appointment of an Investigator-In-Charge (IIC) in accordance with PNG Legislation, Civil Aviation Act (as amended 2016) and ICAO Annex 13 standards.

### Occurrence

On 11 August 2019, at about 11:25 local time (01:25 UTC), a Bell 427 helicopter, registered P2-HSG, owned and operated by Niugini Helicopters, was conducting a VFR flight from Kokopo, East New Britain Province to Kimbe, West New Britain Province, when it impacted the water, over a reef, about 3.1 nm North West of Baluma township.

The pilot, the sole occupant of the helicopter sustained minor injuries and egressed the aircraft. He was reported to have been rescued about 40 minutes after the accident.

### Safety deficiency description

The operational check flight is required to be carried out in accordance with *PNG CAR Part 91.613* and *Part 43.69 (a) (1) (iv)*.

The operator mentioned in an interview that they were not aware that the pilot would conduct the autorotation RPM exercise on his way back to Kimbe from Kokopo.

For that matter, the AIC examined the Operator's exposition for procedures on who authorises the check flights after the aircraft is released to service. It was found that although the Compliance Matrix under '3. Maintenance requirements' referred to *Section 5.10* for a procedure pursuant to *CAR Part 91.613*, this section was non-existent (*refer to Appendix C, 5.3.2*).

The Operator's exposition had a *Maintenance Flight Check Sheet, Form BL004* (*see Appendix C, 5.3.3*) for the use of maintenance flights data recording.

The operator mentioned in an investigation interview that they did not have a procedure for maintenance flight checks.

The operator further stated that there was no engine off autorotation training on the Bell 427, they only conduct one engine inoperative training.

### **Recommendation number AIC 20-R09/19-1001 to Niugini Helicopters**

The PNG Accident Investigation Commission recommends that Niugini Helicopters should ensure that a procedure for operational flight check pursuant to *PNG CAR Part 91.613*, is developed and documented in the Operator's exposition and that the pilots fully understand it.

#### **Action requested**

The AIC requests that Niugini Helicopters note recommendation *AIC 20-R09/19-1001*, and provide a response to the AIC within 90 days of the issue date but no later than 10 November 2020, and explain (including evidence) how Niugini Helicopters has addressed the safety deficiency identified in the safety recommendation. **STATUS: ACTIVE.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hubert Namani', is written over a faint, circular official stamp. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

**Hubert Namani, LLB**  
*Chief Commissioner*

12 August 2020

## Niugini Helicopters Limited response

The AIC made a courtesy follow up with Niugini Helicopters Limited (NHL) on the recommendation, on 12 July 2022. However, the AIC has not received a response from NHL to date.

## AIC assessment

The AIC notes that NHL has not provided any update for the safety recommendation for the past 12 months.

**The AIC has assigned NHL's lack of response to the safety recommendation as *unsatisfactory* rating.**

The AIC notes that the safety deficiency identified in the safety recommendation remains.

The AIC has recorded the **Status of the Recommendation: CLOSED.**



**Captain Aria Bouraga, MBE**  
*Acting Chief Commissioner*

22 July 2022