



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER

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Safety recommendation: AIC 20-R10/19-1001

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 Operator has established a Quality Management System to ensure compliance with the Rules and to provide a safe and efficient service, a good working environment for all company staff and to facilitate and provide a high standard of customer service, safety and satisfaction.

According to the Operators Safety and Quality Manual, the Safety and Quality Assurance Manager (SQAM) has the responsibility and authority to develop, and document the audit programme (SQAM). The audit programme was reviewed during the investigation in the Operator's Safety and Quality Manual. Company Audits are performed by the SQAM. The SQAM maintain a role independent of those operational and engineering sections being assessed.

The SQAM is responsible for developing, implementing, recording and reviewing procedures for:

- (a) *Conduct of audits*
- (b) *Management review*
- (c) *Continuous improvement, including analysis of error and non-compliance*
- (d) *Document control*
- (e) *Record control*
- (f) *Communication of quality information to staff*

The frequency and scope of audits take into account the nature of the operations to be audited and is undertaken at least yearly, or at most quarterly, based on the Audit Scope Schedule.

The AIC reviewed the last surveillance Audit conducted by CASA PNG on the 17th and 18th of July 2019. The findings for the last internal audit (3rd Quarter of 2018 to 1st Quarter of 2019) were also reviewed.

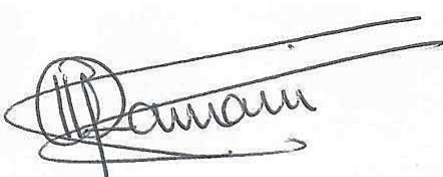
This investigation determined that there was lack of safety oversight by the operator to ensure full compliance with CASA PNG requirements for Maintenance procedures and that staff were fully conforming to the documented operational and maintenance procedures.

Recommendation number AIC 20-R10/19-1001 to Niugini Helicopters

The PNG Accident Investigation Commission recommends that Niugini Helicopters should ensure that its '*Quality Assurance System*' and any other relevant organisational systems, processes and procedures identify deviations from the requirements of the Aircraft Maintenance Manual and management.

Action requested

The AIC requests that Niugini Helicopters note recommendation AIC 20-R10/19-1001, 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', with a large circular flourish 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