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MEDIA RELEASE

PNG ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMISSION RELEASES FINAL REPORT ON HELICOPTER ACCIDENT AT GOBO, JIWAKA PROVINCE

The Acting Chief Commissioner of the PNG Accident Investigation Commission (AIC), Captain Aria Bouraga MBE, today announced the public release of the AIC's *Final Report* on the investigation conducted into a Mil-8 helicopter accident that occurred on 15 May 2021 at Gobo, Jiwaka Province.

Captain Bouraga explained, "On 15 May 2021, at about 11:14am the MIL Mil-8 helicopter, registered P2-MHM operated by Hevilift (PNG) Aviation Limited, impacted terrain following loss of control after take-off at Gobo. The helicopter was carrying 75 bags of coffee to Mt. Hagen Western Highlands Province. The three-flight crew received minor injuries and the passenger was seriously injured. The helicopter was destroyed by impact forces.

"The AIC was notified of the accident on the day of occurrence and immediately commenced an investigation."

Capt. Bouraga said "the investigation found that the crew were unaware that the helicopter's weight exceeded the permissible hover out of ground effect weight for the take-off from Gobo and the accident occurred due to loss of tail rotor authority. Contributing to the loss of tail rotor authority were the overweight condition, and both PIC and co-pilot lacking appropriate training and currency on the MIL-8."

Hevilift conducted an internal investigation and took safety actions to prevent similar occurrences. The AIC issued *Safety Recommendations* to the Hevilift in relation to improving Quality Assurance in respect to identifying deviations from required standards. Hevilift took prompt corrective action to address the safety issues identified in the AIC's *Safety Recommendations* and provided evidence of the actions taken.

Safety Recommendations were also issued to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG in their role as the safety auditor and regulator.

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