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MEDIA RELEASE

RELEASE OF FINAL REPORT ON TROPICAIR LTD DHC-6-400 AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT AT KEREMA AIRPORT, GULF PROVINCE, PNG.

The Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) today published the Final Report on the investigation into an accident involving a DHC-6-400 aircraft at Kerema Airport, Gulf Province, Papua New Guinea.

On 6 February 2025, at 10:28 local time (00:18 UTC), a De Havilland Aircraft of Canada DHC-6-400 Twin Otter, registered P2-AXL, owned by Lagavulin Asset Management Limited (Ltd) and operated by Tropicair Ltd, was conducting an IFR charter flight from Purari Airstrip to Kerema Airport, Gulf Province, when it experienced a runway excursion during landing at Kerema. The aircraft lost directional control during ground roll on landing, veered off the runway, and impacted the runway edge drainage ditch located on the left side of the runway.

At 11:09 (01:09 UTC) on 6 February 2025, Tropicair Limited (Ltd) notified AIC via email about the occurrence. The AIC immediately began gathering pertinent information and commenced an investigation pursuant to *Section 247* of the *PNG Civil Aviation Act 2000*.

The investigation determined that the decision to land on Runway 14 with a prevailing right cross-tailwind component, although within limits, increased landing complexity. While the tailwind component reduced during rollout, the persistent crosswind from the right produced a weathercocking effect that adversely affected the aircraft's directional control during the landing roll and continued to impose destabilising lateral forces, challenging the crew's ability to maintain runway alignment.

As the aircraft departed the paved surface, it encountered damp grass conditions, significantly reducing traction and braking effectiveness. The reduced friction on the damp grass surface, coupled with the aircraft's existing yaw and momentum, rendered recovery attempts ineffective. This loss of control caused the aircraft to skid laterally until it impacted a drainage ditch. In an attempt to regain control and reposition the aircraft back onto the runway, the PIC applied additional thrust while on the unpaved surface. However, this action unintentionally increased the aircraft's ground speed and reduced its ability to decelerate, thereby contributing to the severity of the runway excursion and the subsequent impact.

The AIC issued safety recommendations to both the operator and CASA PNG, aimed at improving operational safety. According to *ICAO Annex 13 Standards*, identified safety deficiencies and concerns must be raised with the persons or organisations best placed to take safety action.

The Final report includes safety recommendations made by the AIC to the operator and CASA PNG. The Final Report of the investigation is available on AIC's website www.aic.gov.pg

Authorised for release by:

Maryanne J. Wal
Chief Commissioner