

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198803509**

Hiller UH12-E

21 December 1988

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NOTE: All air safety occurrences reported to the ATSB are categorised and recorded. For a detailed explanation on Category definitions please refer to the ATSB website at www.atsb.gov.au.

Occurrence Number: 198803509 **Occurrence Type:** Accident

Location: Killarney (31 km ESE Warwick) QLD

Date: 21 December 1988 **Time:** 1030

Highest Injury Level: Nil

Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	1	1
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	1

Aircraft Details: Hiller UH12-E

Registration: VH-PYH

Serial Number: N/K

Operation Type: Aerial Work

Damage Level: Substantial

Departure Point: Killarney QLD

Departure Time: N/A

Destination: Killarney QLD

Approved for Release: 3 February 1989

Circumstances:

The pilot was operating the aircraft from the top of a gently sloping ridge in light and variable wind conditions. He lifted the aircraft into a hover one metre above ground level and began to accelerate forward. At about translational lift speed, the helicopter lost height and the tail rotor struck the ground. The pilot was able to land the aircraft straight ahead. Damage was sustained to the tail rotor drive, gearbox, and blades. The pilot had started work at 0445 hours on the day of the accident. He had flown 4.5 hours and had sprayed five chemical loads prior to the accident. This was the first concentrated period of flying he had undertaken in more than three weeks. Also, it was his first early morning start in that time. Both these aspects could have led to the pilot suffering a degree of transient fatigue. This might have been sufficient to cause a slight degradation in his performance sufficient for him not to compensate fully for the nose-up pitch as the helicopter passed through translational lift. This accident was not the subject of an on-site investigation.

Significant Factors:

The following factors were considered relevant to the development of the accident

1. The pilot was probably suffering from transient fatigue.
2. The pilot apparently misjudged the control input required as the helicopter passed through translational lift, allowing the tail boom to contact the ground.