

1. LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE

25 miles east north-east of Kumarina, W.A.	Height a.m.s.l. (ft) 2200 feet	Date 9.8.69	Time (Local) 1300	Zone WST
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2. THE AIRCRAFT

Make and Model Bell 47G3B1	Registration VH-BHE	Certificate of Airworthiness	Valid from 19.12.67	Valid to 18.12.76
Registered Owner West Australian Helicopters Pty. Ltd., 65 Gordon Street, OSBORNE PARK, W.A.	Operator West Australian Helicopters Pty.Ltd., 65 Gordon Street, OSBORNE PARK, W.A.	Degree of damage to aircraft Destroyed		
		Other property damaged P.M.G. lines and poles		
Defects discovered				

3. THE FLIGHT

Last or intended departure point Kumarina	Time of departure 1240	Next point of intended landing Mount Newman	Purpose of flight Positioning	Class of operation Private
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THE CREW

Name	Status	Age	Class of licence	Hours on type	Total hours	Degree of injury
Leo Anthony BARBER	Pilot	40	Commercial Helicopter	442 hours	Rotary wing 1422 hours Fixed wing 1392 hours	Serious

5. OTHER PERSONS (All passengers and persons injured on ground)

Name	Status	Degree of injury	Name	Status	Degree of injury
Jon HOUGHTON	Passenger	Serious			

6. CONTRAVENTIONS OF REGULATIONS AND ORDERS

Regulation or Order No.	Nature of contravention
A.N.R. 133(2)(b)	The aircraft was flown at a height lower than 500 feet above the terrain.

RELEVANT EVENTS

The helicopter was being ferried from Perth to Mount Newman by two pilots who were taking turns as pilot-in-command. After an overnight stay at Meekatharra the flight was resumed and a headwind of 12-15 knots was encountered. At Kumarina the aircraft was refuelled from drums carried in the aircraft and, in an effort to minimise the headwind component, the pilot flew at an extremely low height, following part of the old Great Northern Highway. At a point where the old road joins the new highway, the helicopter struck a steel bracing wire stretched across the highway between two telephone poles. The aircraft crashed to the roadway and was destroyed by impact forces.

8. OPINION AS TO CAUSE

The cause of the accident was that the aircraft was flown at an unsafe height.

Report approved <i>E. S. Graham</i> (D.S. GRAHAM)	Designation Assistant Director-General (Air Safety Investigation)	Date 27.11.69
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DEFINITIONS

ACCIDENT - An occurrence associated with the operation of an aircraft which takes place between the time any person boards the aircraft with the intention of flight until such time as all those persons have disembarked and in which

- (a) any person suffers death or serious injury as a result of being in or upon the aircraft or by direct contact with the aircraft or anything attached to the aircraft; or
- (b) the aircraft suffers substantial damage.

FATAL INJURY - Any injury which results in death within 30 days.

SERIOUS INJURY - Any injury other than a fatal injury which

- (a) requires hospitalisation for more than 48 hours, commencing within seven days from the date the injury was received; or
- (b) results in a fracture of any bone (except simple fractures of fingers, toes or nose); or
- (c) involves lacerations which cause severe haemorrhages, nerve, muscle or tendon damage; or
- (d) involves injury to any internal organ; or
- (e) involves second or third degree burns, or any burns affecting more than five percent of the body surface.

MINOR INJURY - Any injury other than as defined under "Fatal Injury" or "Serious Injury".

DESTROYED - Consumed by fire, demolished or damaged beyond repair.

SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE - Damage or structural failure which adversely affects the structural strength, performance or flight characteristics of the aircraft and which would normally require major repair or replacement of the affected component. The following types of damage are specifically excluded: engine failure, damage limited to an engine, bent fairings or cowlings, dented skin, small punctured holes in the skin or fabric, taxi-ing damage to propeller blades, damage to tyres, engine accessories, brakes, or wingtips.

MINOR DAMAGE - Damage other than as defined under "Destroyed" or "Substantial Damage".