

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198903753**

Aerospatiale AS350-B

3 March 1989

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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: 198903753 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: Comboyuro Point, Moreton Island (022°/42 km Brisbane Airport) QLD
Date: 3 March 1989 **Time:** 1926
Highest Injury Level: Minor
Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	1	1
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	3	0
Total	0	0	3	1

Aircraft Details: Aerospatiale AS350-B
Registration: VH-OTV
Serial Number: 1905
Operation Type: Private
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: Mt Cootha, Brisbane QLD
Departure Time: 1905
Destination: Comboyuro Point QLD

Approved for Release: 31 July 1989

Circumstances:

The pilot was flying a night approach to a beach landing area marked by a circle of lights consisting of three motor vehicles and six flashing strobe lights. The approach was flown over water in conditions described as very dark, with no visible horizon below 500 feet altitude. The pilot reported that the approach appeared to be proceeding normally when, at what he thought was about 200 feet altitude, the helicopter suddenly yawed right and struck the water. No fault was found with the helicopter which might have contributed to the accident. Wreckage examination indicated that the helicopter contacted the water while in a right skid and that the main and tail rotors were under power at impact.

Significant Factors:

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

1. There was no natural visible horizon and the ambient light was insufficient to provide adequate visual cues for the pilot to complete a safe approach.
2. The level of illumination provided by the helicopter landing light was inadequate.
3. The landing area lighting arrangement did not provide adequate visual cues for the pilot to complete a safe approach.