

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
198803496**

**Robinson R-22 Beta**

**10 November 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](http://www.atsb.gov.au).**

**Occurrence Number:** 198803496                      **Occurrence Type:** Accident  
**Location:** Vanrook Station (135 km NE Normanton), QLD  
**Date:** 10 November 1988                      **Time:** 1230  
**Highest Injury Level:** Nil  
**Injuries:**

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	1	1
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>

**Aircraft Details:** Robinson R-22 Beta  
**Registration:** VH-HAP  
**Serial Number:** R-22-600  
**Operation Type:** Aerial Work - Cattle  
                          Mustering  
**Damage Level:** Substantial  
**Departure Point:** Vanrook Station  
**Departure Time:** 1230  
**Destination:** Vanrook Station

**Approved for Release:** 6 February 1989

**Circumstances:**

The helicopter was being operated from a clearing in flat, tree covered terrain. It was heading into wind and had reached a height of about one metre after lift-off when it suddenly swung to the right and moved backwards. The tail skid and rotor struck the ground and the helicopter swung further right. The main rotor blades then contacted the ground and the helicopter rolled on to its side. The pilot reported that a local whirlwind had caught the helicopter just after lift-off. Overnight rain had prevented the tell-tale dust plume from developing. 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 aircraft was disturbed by a local whirlwind of which the pilot had no warning.
2. The pilot was unable to prevent the tail skid and tail rotor contacting the ground.