

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198900831**

Robinson R22-Beta

5 October 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: 198900831 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: 75 Km South-West Coolibah Station NT
Date: 5 October 1989 **Time:** 1430
Highest Injury Level: Nil
Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	0	1	1
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	0	0	0	1
Total	0	0	0	2

Aircraft Details: Robinson R22-Beta
Registration: VH-HYZ
Serial Number: 543
Operation Type: Private
Damage Level: Destroyed
Departure Point: 55 Km South-West
Coolibah Station NT
Departure Time: 1400
Destination: Coolibah Station NT

Approved for Release: 17th October 1989

Circumstances:

The pilot was engaged on a survey flight for the owner of Coolibah Station, the operator of the helicopter. While flying at approximately 500 feet above ground level(agl) a turn downwind was initiated. The helicopter was close to maximum all up weight and it started to lose altitude. The pilot started to apply more power but the helicopter continued to sink and the rotor rpm decayed. The pilot saw a gap in the trees and attempted to land in it, however, the mainrotor hit a tree. The helicopter then slid along on the skids for approximately 10 metres before they dug into the ground and the helicopter nosed over. The pilot was engaged in conversation with the passenger and allowed himself to become distracted. He may have commenced recovery action too late. However, the helicopter was descending downwind which are conditions which predispose towards settling-with-power. Settling-with-power happens when the mainrotor is settling in its own downwash and additional power will not stop the descent. The pilot's statement that he was applying more and more power but that the helicopter kept sinking indicates that settling-with-power was likely. Part of the technique for recovery from settling-with-power is to increase indicated airspeed before increasing power. This accident was not the subject of a formal on scene investigation.

Significant Factors:

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

1. The pilot allowed himself to become distracted by engaging in conversation with his passenger.
2. The mainrotor rpm was allowed to decay.
3. Correct recovery action was not taken to recover from the condition of settling-with-power.