

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198402336**

Robinson R22A

4 July 1984

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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: 198402336
Location: 11 km SE of Mildura VIC
Date: 4 July 1984
Highest Injury Level: Minor
Injuries:

Occurrence Type: Accident
Time: N/K

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

Aircraft Details: Robinson R22A
Registration: VH-UXM
Serial Number:
Operation Type: Ferry Flight
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: Swan Hill VIC
Departure Time: N/K
Destination: Mildura VIC

Approved for Release: 30th January, 1985

Circumstances:

The aircraft departed Camden on the previous afternoon for a ferry flight to the Kununurra area, with an overnight stop near Eildon, Victoria. About 35 kilometres from Mildura the pilot reported that he was landing due to a vibration. After inspecting the aircraft he continued with the flight but later made a brief Mayday call. Witnesses reported that the engine was running intermittently before the helicopter landed heavily, tail-down, in a vineyard. A contaminant, sufficient in quantity to restrict the flow of fuel, was found in the fuel system filter. The source of the contaminant could not be identified, however an identical polyester material was found in the fuel filter of another new helicopter of the same type. It is probable that the material was present prior to the import of the helicopters. The fuel filters were not inspected prior to the first flight. The helicopter was being operated on super motor spirit at the time but it is considered unlikely, in this instance, to have been the major factor in the engine failure. Due to the pilot's incorrect diagnosis that the power surges were associated with a main rotor problem, he progressively opened the throttle in an attempt to maintain rotor rpm. This action combined with the momentary power surges, exacerbated control difficulties being experienced and resulted in a belated autorotative landing.