

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
198803432**

Bell 206 L-1

11 February 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.

Occurrence Number: 198803432
Location: Port Douglas QLD
Date: 11 February 1988
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: Bell 206 L-1
Registration: VH-FTV
Serial Number: 45241
Operation Type: Aerial Work
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: Port Douglas QLD
Departure Time: 0612
Destination: Lockhart River QLD

Approved for Release: February 28th 1989

Circumstances:

The pilot had decided to discontinue the flight due to deteriorating weather conditions. As he was approaching Port Douglas the visibility decreased to the extent that he was unable to maintain visual contact with the coastline. The pilot said that he decreased power to reduce forward speed in an attempt to maintain visual contact, and shortly after this he felt a bump and directional control was lost. The aircraft landed in about 1.5 metres of water some 600 metres from the shoreline. Damage to the tailrotor blades and gearbox, which had separated from the aircraft, indicated that the tailrotor had struck the water before separation.

Significant Factors:

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

1. The pilot encountered rapidly deteriorating visibility which prevented him from maintaining visual flight, and he misjudged the altitude of the aircraft above the water.