

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199001166**

Hughes 269-C

24 November 1990

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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: 199001166
Location: Lethbridge VIC
Date: 24 November 1990
Highest Injury Level: Minor
Injuries:

Occurrence Type: Accident

Time: 1458

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

Aircraft Details: Hughes 269-C
Registration: VH-NCL
Serial Number: 1230265
Operation Type: Charter
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: Lethbridge VIC
Departure Time: N/A
Destination: Lethbridge VIC

Approved for Release: 19th June 1991

Circumstances:

The pilot was conducting joy flights. The aircraft had just been refuelled. During a takeoff, the helicopter reached a height of about 20 feet and an airspeed of approximately 30 knots when engine power decreased briefly and rotor RPM decayed. The helicopter was over a dam at the time. While attempting to reach the nearby bank, the pilot turned downwind and overpitched the main rotors. The helicopter descended into 1.5 metres of fresh water. An engineering examination has disclosed that the right hand magneto had an intermittent fault and that the number three cylinder lower spark plug lead had an intermittent short. The findings cannot be considered to be totally conclusive due to water immersion. However it is considered probable that the engine power loss was an intermittent total spark loss on number three cylinder. This accident was not the subject of an on-scene investigation.