

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
198900803**

**Hughes 269B**

**18 March 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](http://www.atsb.gov.au).**

**Occurrence Number:** 198900803  
**Location:** Parafield SA  
**Date:** 18 March 1989  
**Highest Injury Level:** Serious  
**Injuries:**

**Occurrence Type:** Accident

**Time:** 400

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

**Aircraft Details:** Hughes 269B  
**Registration:** VH-XXM  
**Serial Number:** 14-0014  
**Operation Type:** Private  
**Damage Level:** Substantial  
**Departure Point:** Parafield SA  
**Departure Time:** N/A  
**Destination:** Parafield SA

**Approved for Release:** 3 July 1989

#### **Circumstances:**

The pilot had only just taken delivery of the helicopter. After attending a party he invited an acquaintance to inspect the aircraft and listen to a compact disc player which was installed. The pilot stated that the helicopter battery did not seem to have much charge and since he knew the aircraft was to be used in the morning, he decided to start the engine. He believed that there was a note in the Flight Manual stating not to leave the engine running too long without engaging the main rotors. He therefore engaged the rotor and the next thing he could recall was that the helicopter was on its right side. The pilot, although the owner of the helicopter, was not qualified or authorised for night flying. He had consumed some alcohol at the party, and there is some doubt as to whether a takeoff had been intended. Nevertheless, by starting the engine and engaging the main rotor, the pilot should have been aware that an inadvertent takeoff was possible.

#### **Significant Factors:**

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

1. The pilot had consumed an amount of alcohol, which may have led to an impairment of judgement.
2. The pilot, who was not qualified to make a flight at night, started the engine of the helicopter and engaged the main rotor drive.
3. The aircraft became airborne, but whether this was the result of pilot input to the controls or an inadvertent reaction was not determined.