Aviation Safety Investigation Report 199000069

Bell 206-B

02 January 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: 199000069 Occurrence Type: Accident

Location: Tuart Hill WA

Date: 02 January 1990 **Time:** 902

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-B **Registration:** VH-AZD **Serial Number:** 761

Operation Type: Aerial Work
Damage Level: Substantial
Departure Point: Tuart Hill WA

Departure Time: N/A

Destination: Rottnest Island WA

Approved for Release: 24th September 1991

Circumstances:

Shortly after the aircraft departed the television station helipad, the pilot became concerned about a decay in the power available. He carried out a precautionary landing on a suburban road adjacent to, but on the opposite side of a fence from the helipad. One of the two passengers disembarked and the pilot carried out a power check which appeared normal. The pilot elected to reposition the helicopter back on to the helipad. Shortly after lift off the power again decayed and the pilot attempted a precautionary landing back onto the road. The main rotor blades made contact with the tail boom during the second landing. Although some minor faults were found in the engine fuel system none of them were significant enough to cause the loss of power reported by the pilot. No other faults were found which may have contributed to the accident. The reason for the loss of power was not determined. The pilot's decision to attempt a return to the pad was influenced by the apparently normal power check, following the first landing, and his concern about the possibility of a vehicle/aircraft collision if the aircraft remained on what was a major access road with visibility restricted by a curve.

Significant Factors:

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

- 1. An undetermined problem within the engine system caused a loss of power during a critical stage of the take off.
- 2. The pilot's decision to attempt a second takeoff with a suspect engine led to the aircraft reaching a position from where a successful forced landing could not be achieved. The pilot made his decision based on the facts that were available to him at the time. A more prudent decision might have been to arrange for road blocks to be put in place as soon as possible and wait for an engineer to inspect the aircraft.