

# **Aviation Safety Investigation Report 198201408**

**Bell 206B**

**7 August 1982**

Readers are advised that the Australian Transport Safety Bureau investigates for the sole purpose of enhancing transport safety. Consequently, Bureau reports are confined to matters of safety significance and may be misleading if used for any other purposes.

Investigations commenced on or before 30 June 2003, including the publication of reports as a result of those investigations, are authorised by the CEO of the Bureau in accordance with Part 2A of the Air Navigation Act 1920.

Investigations commenced after 1 July 2003, including the publication of reports as a result of those investigations, are authorised by the CEO of the Bureau in accordance with the Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003 (TSI Act). Reports released under the TSI Act are not admissible as evidence in any civil or criminal proceedings.

**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:** 198201408                      **Occurrence Type:** Accident  
**Location:** San Michele, 9 km South East of Adaminaby NSW  
**Date:** 7 August 1982                                      **Time:** 1605  
**Highest Injury Level:** Fatal  
**Injuries:**

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None
Crew	0	1	0	0
Ground	0	0	0	-
Passenger	3	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Aircraft Details:** Bell 206B  
**Registration:** VH-TXR  
**Serial Number:**  
**Operation Type:** Film Photography  
**Damage Level:** Destroyed  
**Departure Point:** "San Michele" NSW  
**Departure Time:** 1605  
**Destination:** "San Michele" NSW

**Approved for Release:** 28th February, 1984

#### **Circumstances:**

The helicopter was being used to film a tourist promotion advertisement. The film to be taken involved horse riders on a trail ride, along a ridgeline, backlit by the late afternoon sun. A ground survey of the area had been completed about ten weeks earlier by the pilot and production film crew. Before commencing the filming the film crew completed another ground survey of the area and also an aerial survey in the helicopter. To facilitate the filming a wooden platform was fitted to the landing skids to carry the cameraman and his equipment. The filming runs were flown in a north-westerly direction parallel to the main power line running through the area. Initially the runs were carried out to the east of the power line but subsequently runs were completed to the west of the line. All runs were flown at heights varying between 10 feet and 100 feet agl. During the last filming run the skids struck the two cables of a spur which ran from the main power line at an angle of 92 degrees. The helicopter pitched nose down and struck the ground in a near vertical attitude. On impact the landing skids, platform and cameraman were thrown clear of the main wreckage. Fire broke out immediately and only the pilot survived the combined effects of impact and fire. The wreckage was completely burnt out. The spur line was strung across a gully over which the helicopter had been flying on the filming runs. The distance between the main line and the first pole on the spur line was 529 m and the line was struck at a point 45 ft agl. Because of the dull grey-brown appearance of the countryside no contrast was provided for the spur line. The filming runs were being made into the late afternoon sun and the pilot and film crew were unaware of the presence of the spur line.

#### **Significant Factors:**

1. Inadequate pre-flight preparation. The survey of the area of operations was not detailed enough to detect the wire.
2. The aircraft was being operated at a low level.

3. The pilot did not see the wire during the operation. Contributing to the non detection of the wire were:- a. Sun glare, the aircraft was being flown into the late afternoon sun. b. The lack of contrast between the wire and the grey/brown country side. c. The long distance between the poles supporting the wire.