

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199700355**

**Bell Helicopter Co
Sioux**

07 February 1997

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 Executive Director 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 Executive Director 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.

The Bureau did not conduct an on scene investigation of this occurrence. The information presented below was obtained from information supplied to the Bureau.

Occurrence Number: 199700355 **Occurrence Type:** Accident
Location: Wiawera Station
State: SA **Inv Category:** 4
Date: Friday 07 February 1997
Time: 1500 hours **Time Zone** CSuT
Highest Injury Level: Minor
Injuries:

	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	Total
Crew	0	0	0	1	1
Ground	0	0	0	0	0
Passenger	0	0	1	1	2
Total	0	0	1	2	3

Aircraft Manufacturer: Bell Helicopter Co
Aircraft Model: 47G-5
Aircraft Registration: VH-JGF **Serial Number:** 7960
Type of Operation: Miscellaneous Search and Rescue
Damage to Aircraft: Substantial
Departure Point: Tikalina Station SA
Departure Time:
Destination: Wiawera Station SA

Crew Details:

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on Type	Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	Commercial	120.0	250

Approved for Release: Friday, February 28, 1997

The pilot was assisting in flood rescue operations and was directed to a homestead where several people had climbed onto its roof to escape from the fast flowing flood waters, which had risen to the height of the roof line.

He approached the homestead at a height of about 2m above the water level, then hovered the helicopter along side the roof to allow an elderly person to board. This person had had a safety rope attached to him to prevent him from slipping off the steeply pitched roof. As he climbed onto the skids his weight moved the helicopter slightly sideways and the rope snagged on the roof causing the helicopter to descend. The pilot was unable to arrest the downward movement in the height available before the helicopter struck the water and sank.

All occupants escaped, the pilot recovered the ELT and activated it.

