

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199703385**

**Hughes Helicopters
Hughes 300**

10 October 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.

Occurrence Number: 199703385	Occurrence Type: Accident
Location: Gamboola Station 100NM W Mareeba	
State: QLD	Inv Category: 4
Date: Friday 10 October 1997	
Time: 1815 hours	Time Zone: EST
Highest Injury Level: None	
 Aircraft Manufacturer: Hughes Helicopters	
Aircraft Model: 269C	
Aircraft Registration: VH-MZR	Serial Number: 1100995
Type of Operation: Commercial Aerial Mapping/Photo/Survey	
Damage to Aircraft: Substantial	
Departure Point: Gamboola Station Qld	
Departure Time: 1525 EST	
Destination: 6 NM N Gamboola	

Crew Details:

<u>Role</u>	<u>Class of Licence</u>	<u>Hours on</u>	
		<u>Type</u>	<u>Hours Total</u>
Pilot-In-Command	Commercial	203.0	345

Approved for Release: Tuesday, October 28, 1997

The pilot reported that when he was about 3 NM from the departure point he smelt smoke, and then saw smoke entering the cabin and trailing behind the aircraft. He immediately turned back towards a suitable landing site about 1 NM away, but the engine lost oil pressure and performance started to deteriorate. The pilot carried out an autorotational landing with partial power into a confined area, and on touchdown the vertical stabiliser and tail rotor blades struck an anthill. Subsequent inspection revealed a ruptured oil line as the cause of the smoke and loss of oil pressure. Structural damage was confined to the tail rotor blades, horizontal and vertical stabilisers, tail rotor transmission and drive shaft, and tail boom.
