

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199600968**

**Hughes Helicopters
Hughes 300**

25 March 1996

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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.

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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.

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:	199600968	Occurrence Type:	Accident
Location:	120km NNE Kalgoorlie/Boulder, Aerodrome		
State:	WA	Inv Category:	4
Date:	Monday 25 March 1996		
Time:	1330 hours	Time Zone	WST
Highest Injury Level:	None		

Aircraft Manufacturer:	Hughes Helicopters		
Aircraft Model:	269C		
Aircraft Registration:	VH-ADL	Serial Number:	900957
Type of Operation:	Commercial	Aerial Culling	
Damage to Aircraft:	Substantial		
Departure Point:	120 km NNE Kalgoorlie WA		
Departure Time:	1330 WST		
Destination:	120 km NNE Kalgoorlie WA		

Crew Details:

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on Type	Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	Commercial	81.0	786

Approved for Release: Thursday, May 9, 1996

It was reported that the pilot was hovering the helicopter in a 12-15 kt headwind, 10-15 ft above trees. Consequently, a less than average power setting was required to maintain height. The wind strength suddenly reduced and the helicopter descended towards the trees. The pilot increased collective pitch and power to stop the descent and re-establish the hover. Although the helicopter came close to the tree tops the pilot did not believe there had been any contact with them.

Shortly afterwards, the pilot heard an unusual noise coming from the main rotor blades. He landed to investigate and found dents and holes in all three main rotor blades.