

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report  
199603174**

**Robinson Helicopter Co  
R22**

**03 October 1996**

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.

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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](http://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.

<b>Occurrence Number:</b> 199603174	<b>Occurrence Type:</b> Accident
<b>Location:</b> 15km SSW Rutland Plains, (ALA)	
<b>State:</b> QLD	<b>Inv Category:</b> 4
<b>Date:</b> Thursday 03 October 1996	
<b>Time:</b> 1745 hours	<b>Time Zone:</b> EST
<b>Highest Injury Level:</b> None	

<b>Aircraft Manufacturer:</b> Robinson Helicopter Co	
<b>Aircraft Model:</b> R22 BETA	
<b>Aircraft Registration:</b> VH-HXM	<b>Serial Number:</b> 2556
<b>Type of Operation:</b> Non-commercial Aerial Mustering	
<b>Damage to Aircraft:</b> Destroyed	
<b>Departure Point:</b> Rutland Plains Station QLD	
<b>Departure Time:</b> 1645 EST	
<b>Destination:</b> Peartree Yard QLD	

**Crew Details:**

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on	
		Type	Hours Total
Pilot-In-Command	Commercial	2332.0	2440

**Approved for Release:** Thursday, October 31, 1996

The pilot reported that while conducting an aerial inspection of cattle, he flew the helicopter through a descending right turn into wind. As he commenced to flare the helicopter at about 100 ft AGL, the engine RPM dropped rapidly. He lowered the collective control and wound on more throttle. There was no response from the engine.

The helicopter rapidly developed a high sink rate which the pilot was not able to arrest completely before impact with the ground. The helicopter bounced twice and rolled onto its left side. Neither of the two occupants were injured. They escaped from the wreckage through the right cabin exit.

The licenced aircraft maintenance engineer who recovered the helicopter from the accident site reported that he could not find a mechanical reason for the power loss. He said that the helicopter was being operated on mogas which is a more volatile fuel than avgas and in the higher temperatures, it tends to vaporize in the fuel line, causing an interruption of fuel to the engine.

The helicopter was fitted with an approved emergency locator transmitter which operated, alerting the Search and Rescue Centre in Brisbane.

