

**Aviation Safety Investigation Report
199503560**

**Hughes Helicopters
Hughes 300**

25 October 1995

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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: 199503560

Occurrence Type: Accident

Location: 130 km NE Derby, Aerodrome

State: WA

Inv Category: 4

Date: Wednesday 25 October 1995

Time: 1300 hours

Time Zone WST

Highest Injury Level: Serious

Injuries:

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

Aircraft Manufacturer: Hughes Helicopters

Aircraft Model: 269C

Aircraft Registration: VH-LBP

Serial Number: 600932

Type of Operation: Commercial Aerial Mapping/Photo/Survey

Damage to Aircraft: Substantial

Departure Point: Pantjan WA

Departure Time: 1030 WST

Destination: Pantjan WA

Crew Details:

Role	Class of Licence	Hours on		
		Type	Hours	Total
Pilot-In-Command	Commercial		997.0	1277

Approved for Release: Thursday, December 14, 1995

It was reported that the pilot and passenger were conducting a stock survey at 200 ft above ground level when there was a loud noise and severe vibration from the area of the engine. The pilot immediately entered an autorotation descent and turned the helicopter into wind. A check indicated that no power was available from the engine. The terrain was rocky and covered in trees so the pilot attempted to cushion the landing as much as possible. On touchdown one skid collided with a large rock causing the helicopter to roll over onto its side. It caught fire immediately and the passenger, who was the first to exit the wreck, assisted the pilot to escape. The helicopter, including the emergency locator beacon, was destroyed by fire.

The operator maintained its own search and rescue watch on its aircraft and a search was commenced as soon as the aircraft was reported as overdue. The pilot and passenger were found the following day by search aircraft attracted by a signal fire lit by them.

Post accident inspection indicated that the engine problem was caused by the failure of a big-end bolt in the conrod of the no.1 cylinder which allowed the conrod to come loose and punch a hole in the crankcase. The engine had been overhauled by the manufacturer 300 hours (operating time in service) prior to the accident. The fire was probably started by oil that had leaked from the hole in the crankcase onto the exhaust system.