



J10/2/7114

A99-123

SOUTH AFRICAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

ACCIDENT REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Date of Accident	8/11/1999	Time of Accident	1300Z	
Aircraft Registration	ZS-HFB	Type of Aircraft	Hughes 269 C	
Pilot-in-command Licence Type	Private		Licence Valid	Yes
Pilot-in-command Flying Experience	Total Flying Hours	115.0	Total Hours on Type	94.4
Type of Operation	Survey Work (Private)			
Last point of departure	Matatiele area			
Next point of intended landing	Matatiele area			

Location of the accident site with reference to easily defined geographical points (plus GPS readings if possible)

Between Mount Fletcher and Matatiele in lower Drakensberg.

Meteorological Information	Weather was fine, Wind 110° / 25kt				
Number of people on board	1 + 1	No. of people injured	One	No. of people killed	None

Synopsis

The pilot, accompanied by a passenger, was on a survey flight in the lower Drakensberg near Matatiele.

According to the pilot they were ascending a valley when they encountered a sudden and severe downdraft. While trying to escape from the effects of the downdraft the helicopter was forced into the side of the mountain. They landed heavily on sloping terrain and rolled over the edge of a 4 – 5 metre cliff. The helicopter came to rest inverted. The pilot managed to free himself where after he assisted the passenger. As they moved away the wreckage caught fire. He attempted to extinguish the fire but was unsuccessful. The wreckage was destroyed by the fire.

According to a statement by the passenger they departed a farm at approximately 1230Z to do a survey: "At about 1300Z we were climbing in a valley when we suddenly encountered severe turbulence. The pilot tried to manoeuvre out of the valley but the aircraft was forced into the side of the mountain. I then remember being let out of my seat belt by the pilot. I then ran to one side of the aircraft. The aircraft was then destroyed in the fire that occurred right after I got out."

Probable Cause

While ascending a valley the pilot encountered a sudden and severe downdraft. He was unable to escape from the condition and the helicopter was forced into the side of the mountain, it landed heavily and rolled over.