



A00-063-7205

SOUTH AFRICAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

ACCIDENT REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Date of Accident	31 May 2000	Time of Accident	± 0900Z		
Aircraft Registration	ZS-RHW	Type of Aircraft	AS 350 B2		
Pilot-in-command Licence Type	Commercial		Licence Valid	Yes	
Pilot-in-command Flying Experience	Total Flying Hours	717.2	Total Hours on Type	51.0	
Type of Operation	Commercial (Domestic Charter Flight)				
Last point of departure	Cathedral Peak Hotel				
Next point of intended landing	Cathedral Peak Hotel				
Location of the accident site with reference to easily defined geographical points (plus GPS readings if possible)					
In Drakensberg Mountains (28° 09' 064" South and 029° 04' 724" East) (Elevation ± 6 000 feet amsl)					
Meteorological Information	Fine				
Number of people on board	1 + 5	No. of people injured	None	No. of people killed	None
Synopsis	<p>The pilot accompanied by five passengers was engaged in sight seeing flight in the Drakensberg Mountains. While flying down a valley, descending through 100 feet above ground level there was a loud bang which appeared to come from directly behind the rear seated passengers.</p> <p>The aircraft immediately yawed to the left, and simultaneously rolled to the right. The aircraft was shuddering violently, and the cyclic and collective became heavy, as if there was a hydraulic failure.</p> <p>The pilot immediately lowered the collective to arrest the yaw and pulled back on the cyclic to pull out of the roll. He could not recall hearing any warning horn or seeing any warning lights, with no directional control over the aircraft.</p> <p>The aircraft was landed on uneven ground on both skids at a low forward speed, on an uphill incline, with wings level. The main rotor blades struck the embankment on the right side of the aircraft, which overturned the aircraft. The aircraft turned through 180° and came to rest facing down the incline.</p> <p>All the occupants disembarked through the front left-hand passenger door. Nobody was injured in the accident.</p>				
Probable Cause					
<p>The main rotor blades made contact with rocky terrain during a low-level turn. The pilot experience difficulty in controlling the helicopter and a forced landing was executed in an open area during which the helicopter rolled-over.</p>					