



Ref: 7843

SOUTH AFRICAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

ACCIDENT REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Aircraft Registration	ZU-RAM	Date of Accident	11/8/2004	Time of Accident	1400Z
Type of Aircraft	ALOUETTE II		Type of Operation	Private / Industrial Aid	
Pilot-in-command License Type	Private	Age	55	License Valid	Yes
Pilot-in-command Flying Experience	Total Flying Hours	417.2		Hours on Type	194.3
Last point of departure	Farm Baakensrug near Beaufort West				
Next point of intended landing	Farm Baakensrug				
Location of the accident site with reference to easily defined geographical points (GPS readings if possible)					
Farm Baakensrug					
Meteorological Information	Fine: Wind – 360°/20kts, Temperature +20°C, CAVOK				
Number of people on board	1 + 3	No. of people injured	0	No. of people killed	0
Synopsis	<p>The pilot, accompanied by three passengers was returning to the landing site near the farm house, which was surrounded by tall trees. The landing site was approached from an Easterly direction, with the prevailing wind at the time being from the North. According to the pilot the aircraft was established in hover flight at a height of approximately 100-150 feet above ground level. As he initiated his decent he noted a sudden decay in rotor RPM followed by a substantial rate of decent. He applied maximum collective pitch to address the rate of decent and to cushion the landing, but a hard landing followed. On impact, the aircraft bounced back into the air and the aircraft rotated clockwise with the right-hand skid gear assembly colliding with a trailer that was parked nearby. The aircraft came to a halt in the upright position where after the pilot shut down the engine by means of the emergency fuel shut-off lever and all four occupants disembarked uninjured.</p> <p>According to the pilot, he had already conducted three take-off's and landings from the same site that afternoon without any problems. No engine anomalies were noted that could have contributed or caused a sudden loss in engine/rotor RPM.</p> <p>The aircraft was in possession of a valid Authority to Fly, which was issued on 3 August 2004 and expired on 2 August 2005. The pilot was the holder of a valid Private Pilot's license and had the aircraft type endorsed in his logbook.</p>				
Probable Cause	<p>It would appear that the pilot followed the same approach path as with the previous three approaches without properly assessing the prevailing wind conditions, which was reported to be fairly strong at the time. He attempted to conduct a vertical (hover) decent onto an area surrounded by tall trees, and most probably encountered a severe down draught as he descended below the tree line. He was unable to take any evasive action and a hard landing followed.</p>				