

CA18/2/3/8123



SOUTH AFRICAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

ACCIDENT REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Aircraft Registration	ZS -RAO	Date of Accident	05 May 2006	Time of Accident	1130Z
Type of Aircraft	ROBINSON R22 BETA		Type of Operation		Private
Pilot-in-command Licence Type	Private	Age	22	Licence Valid	Yes
Pilot-in-command Flying Experience	Total Flying Hours	317.5		Hours on Type	275.1
Last point of departure	Steenbokpan farm in Vaalwater near Thabazimbi				
Next point of intended landing	Umzimpele farm in Vaalwater near Thabazimbi				
Location of the accident site with reference to easily defined geographical points (GPS readings if possible)					
Umzimpele farm; (GPS; S23° 57.2" E 027° 31.89").					
Meteorological Information	Temperature: 19°C, wind: NE, Calm; Visibility Good.				
Number of people on board	1 + 1	No. of people injured	1	No. of people killed	0
Synopsis	<p>The pilot accompanied by a passenger took off from a private farm, (Steenbokpan) for a short flight to another farm, (Umzimpele) which is close by. The pilot stated that during the approach for landing on an identified open field, at the indicated air speed of approximately 50 knots, he required to apply more power and during this time, the engine suffered a sudden loss of power.</p> <p>He immediately lowered collective pitch lever in order to attain forward speed, but due to the tall trees and insufficient clearance with the trees, it was difficult to avoid them and an impact followed. The helicopter rolled onto its port side between the trees. The main rotor blades were substantially damaged when they impacted the trees and the tail rotor blades failed on impact.</p> <p>The pilot did not sustain any injuries but the passenger suffered injury to his wrist.</p> <p>The last Mandatory Periodic Inspection (MPI) was certified on 13 March 2006 at 3056.2 airframe hours and the aircraft was operated for 100.6 hours since this MPI was certified.</p> <p>The Aircraft Maintenance Organisation Nr: 846 was properly audited in the last two years and no major findings were recorded.</p> <p>The aircraft was recovered to an approved Aircraft Maintenance Organization for further investigation. The aircraft was tied down in the same manner as it was recovered and ground run tests were performed. The engine operated smoothly without any abnormalities observed.</p>				
Probable Cause					
<p>The helicopter collided with high trees during a landing in an open field on a private farm.</p> <p>Contributory factor: Error in judgement by the pilot in command with regard to the safe clearance of the trees whilst landing.</p>					