



AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

				Reference:	CA18/2/3/8211	
Aircraft Registration	ZS-HKS	Date of Accident	23 November 2006		Time of Accident	1615Z
Type of Aircraft	Hughes 269C		Type of Operation		Game Capture	
Pilot-in-command License Type		Commercial	Age	36	License Valid	Yes
Pilot-in-command Flying Experience		Total Flying Hours	2 300.0		Hours on Type	1 200.0
Last point of departure		Farm Easterstead, in the Cradock district				
Next point of intended landing		Farm Easterstead, in the Cradock district				
Location of the accident site with reference to easily defined geographical points (GPS readings if possible)						
On the farm Easterstead, Cradock district (GPS position: South 32°23.099' East 025°40.487', elevation 2 620 ft)						
Meteorological Information		Surface wind; 180°/17kt, Temperature; 28°C, Visibility; +10km				
Number of people on board	1 + 0	No. of people injured	0	No. of people killed	0	
Synopsis		<p>The pilot was tasked to herd approximately thirty-six (36) springbok (small type of antelope) into a boma. The buck had to be relocated to another game farm in the area. The flight originated in the late afternoon, as they had to wait for the temperature to cool down before they could commence with the herding process, as the intense heat might result in the exhaustion of the animals, which could cause them to perish. As they approached the boma, the animals most probably became aware of the obstruction/hazard and the pilot was required to execute some manoeuvring in close proximity to the ground in order to contain the animals. It would appear that the pilot allowed the tail rotor assembly to make contact with the ground. As a result the tail rotor guard failed at its attachment to the tail boom and the tail rotor blades also struck the ground, with one of the blades failing partially of the root section, rendering the pilot without tail rotor authority. Subsequent to the event the helicopter started to yaw/spin in a clockwise direction and the pilot was unable to arrest the yaw rate. As the helicopter started to spin the tail boom assembly separated from the fuselage. According to the pilot, after approximately five to six full revolutions the helicopter cabin area impacted the ground and remained upright. Once the main rotor blades stopped turning some of capture personnel ran towards the helicopter to assist the pilot, who was badly bruised on his back and left lower ribcage, he was taken to the nearest town for a medical evaluation. The helicopter was extensively damaged. The pilot was the holder of a valid Commercial pilot's license and he had a valid non-restricted medical certificate, which expires on 28 February 2007. The operator was the holder of a valid Air Operating Certificate (AOC No. N235D) at the time of the occurrence with an expiry date of 23 March 2007. The last Mandatory Periodic Inspection (MPI) prior to the accident was certified on 12 October 2006 at 6 784.4 airframe hours and the aircraft had accumulated a further 40.2 hours since the last MPI was certified. The Aircraft Maintenance Organisation (AMO) was audited on 20 December 2005 and the aircraft type was accepted in South Africa. The aircraft had a Certificate of Registration No: 4667/ZS-HKS/7 with an issue date of 23 February 2004 and the Certificate of Airworthiness was valid with a Currency Fee expiry date of 9 February 2007.</p>				
Probable Cause						
The pilot allowed to the tail rotor assembly of the helicopter to make contact with the ground during a game herding operation while manoeuvring in close proximity to the ground, which resulted in a loss of tail rotor authority, rendering ground impact inevitable.						
The fact that the pilot was positioned downwind at the time should be considered as a contributory factor to this event.						
IARC Date				Release Date		