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Our Ref: AIC 15-R04/15-1003

Safety recommendation: AIC 15-R04/15-1003

Addressed to: Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG

Date issued: 30 July 2015

Investigation link: AIC 15-1003

Action status: Issued

Safety deficiency/advisory description

The Philippines registered Robinson R44/Clipper helicopter, operated by Frabelle (PNG) Ltd., had recently undergone maintenance to replace all six cylinders on the engine, at the operator's land base in Lae, Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea. The helicopter was normally ship based, and was used for tuna fish spotting. It was substantially damaged when it struck a wire while low flying along the Bumbu River near Lae, on 22 May 2015.

The investigation found that the helicopter operator had received approval from the PNG Ports Corporation Limited (Permit No. PO9-PH-BT-0004/15), to *'undertake Helicopter-Ship operation between the vessel Purple Beauty 888 and helicopter R44/Clipper -1 on 21 May 2015, within the declared port of Lae at the Main Wharf'*. Prior to the accident the helicopter had been flown to the operator's land base, in the Lae ports wharf area. At the time of the accident the helicopter was operating outside the Lae ports area, below 500 ft, and over the built up area of the eastern suburbs of Lae. The operator had not obtained approval to operate over the built up area from, and back to the Lae wharf area below 500 ft. The pilot was not authorised to conduct an engine test flight and practice autorotation with passengers on board.

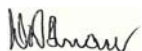
Recommendation number AIC 15-R04/15-1003 to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG.

The Accident Investigation Commission recommends that the Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG should bring this report to the attention of the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines.

Action requested

The AIC notes the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) of PNG comment on the draft report AIC 15-1003, dated 28 July 2015. 'Discussions to be initiated with National Fisheries Authority (NFA) and PNG Ports regarding operation of ship based/fishing vessels operated helicopters.'

The AIC recommendation AIC 15-R04/15-1003 was not addressed in the CASA response dated 28 July 2015. Before the AIC can close the recommendation as fully satisfactorily addressing the safety deficiency, the AIC requests that the CASA provide a further response to this AIC recommendation within 60 days of the issue date, and provide evidence how the CASA has addressed the recommendation.



David Inau
Chief Executive Officer

Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG (CASA) response


On 28 July 2015, CASA wrote to the AIC stating:

Discussions to be initiated with National Fisheries Authority (NFA) and PNG Ports regarding operation of ship-based/fishing vessels operated helicopters.

While that stated intended action is a positive undertaking, it did not address the safety recommendation. Despite subsequent requests to CASA for an evidence-based response, the AIC has not received a response from CASA addressing the recommendation.

PNG Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) assessment of Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG (CASA) response

As a result of the AIC not receiving an evidence-based response from CASA addressing the recommendation AIC 15-R04/15-1003 addressed to CASA, the AIC assigned this nil response an **unsatisfactory** rating, and records the **Status of the AIC Recommendation: Active**



David Inau, ML
Chief Executive Officer

11 October 2015

Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG (CASA) response

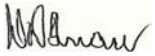
The AIC wrote to CASA on 24 November 2016 listing this among the recommendations to CASA that were still outstanding. On 2 December 2016, the Director of CASA PNG informed the AIC that:

CASA PNG disagrees with this recommendation to bring this matter to the attention of the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines as we believe that the responsibility for contacting the State of Registration about the accident aircraft rests with the PNG AIC where the occurrence occurred because of Annex 13 requirement of protection of evidence and the responsibility of the State of Occurrence for the custody and removal of the aircraft.

Therefore, CASA understands that formal notification rests with AIC of the investigation to the appropriate authorities in the Phillipines and whilst formal responsibility for an investigation belongs to PNG (where the accident occurred), it may delegate part of that investigation to the Phillipine authorities.

PNG Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) assessment of Civil Aviation Safety Authority of PNG (CASA) response

The AIC has reviewed the CASA PNG response addressing the recommendation AIC 15-R04/15-1003 addressed to CASA. In its recommendation the AIC referred to a completed investigation report and was seeking the assistance of CASA PNG to bring the report to the attention of the Philippines regulatory safety authority. This has now been achieved and the AIC assigned this response a **satisfactory** rating, and records the **Status of the AIC Recommendation: Closed.**



David Inau, ML

Chief Executive Officer

7 December 2016