

Follow-up Action on Occurrence Report

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ACCIDENT TO BELL 206B, G-WLLY, 3NM NE OF COUPAR ANGUS, PERTSHIRE ON 21 DECEMBER 2005

(HELICOPTER CRASHED AFTER TAIL ROTOR BECAME DETACHED)

CAA FACTOR NUMBER : F49/2006
FACTOR PUBLICATION DATE : 12 December 2006
OPERATOR : G & N Aviation
CAA OCCURRENCE NUMBER : 2005/10450
AAIB REPORT : Bulletin 12/2006

SYNOPSIS

(From AAIB Report)

The pilot of the helicopter and an observer were carrying out a pipeline inspection flight between Cumbernauld Airport and Aberdeen. Approximately 45 minutes after takeoff, the helicopter descended to low level where debris was seen to fall from its aft section. Control of the helicopter was lost and it struck the ground, fatally injuring both occupants. The investigation found that the vertical stabiliser had detached from the tail boom and struck the tail rotor. This subsequently caused the tail rotor and associated gearbox to become detached from the tail boom, resulting in the helicopter's centre of gravity moving outside controllable limits.

The cause of the fin detachment was fatigue, in the fin attachment supports. It was concluded that this was the result of insufficient torque in the fin attachment fasteners.

FOLLOW UP ACTION

The two Safety Recommendations, made by the AAIB following their investigation, are reproduced below, together with the CAA's responses.

Recommendation 2006-39

It is recommended that the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority require a one-off inspection, within a reasonable timescale, of the vertical fin supports of all Bell and Agusta-Bell 206 series helicopters on the UK register. The inspection should be conducted with the fin removed in order to obtain adequate access.

CAA Response

The CAA accepts the AAIB recommendation for a one-off inspection of the Bell and Agusta-Bell 206 series helicopters on the UK register insofar as this supports the AAIB's need to gather information to assist the investigation. The CAA proposes to issue a Letter to Operators (LTO) that would request such an inspection at the

next 100 hour maintenance input. The LTO will leave the inspection to be at the operator's discretion, since it is the responsibility of Transport Canada and EASA to determine whether the inspection should be made mandatory.

The Recommendation was received in February and the LTO was subsequently published in June 2006.

CAA Status - Closed

Recommendation 2006-40

It is recommended that Transport Canada, the European Aviation Safety Agency and the US Federal Aviation Administration each consider requiring a one-off inspection, within a reasonable timescale, of the vertical fin supports of all Bell and Agusta-Bell 206 series helicopters within their jurisdictions.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

CAA Status - Closed