



Papua New Guinea

**ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION
COMMISSION**

PRELIMINARY AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT

**P2-RUH
BO 105
7.5 KM SW TIMINI
MOROBE PROVINCE
PAPUA NEW GUINEA.**

8 TH AUGUST 2011

FACTUAL INFORMATION

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS PRELIMINARY REPORT IS DERIVED FROM THE INITIAL INVESTIGATION OF THE OCCURRENCE. READERS ARE CAUTIONED THAT THERE IS THE POSSIBILITY THAT NEW EVIDENCE MAY BECOME AVAILABLE THAT ALTERS THE CIRCUMSTANCES AS DEPICTED IN THIS REPORT.

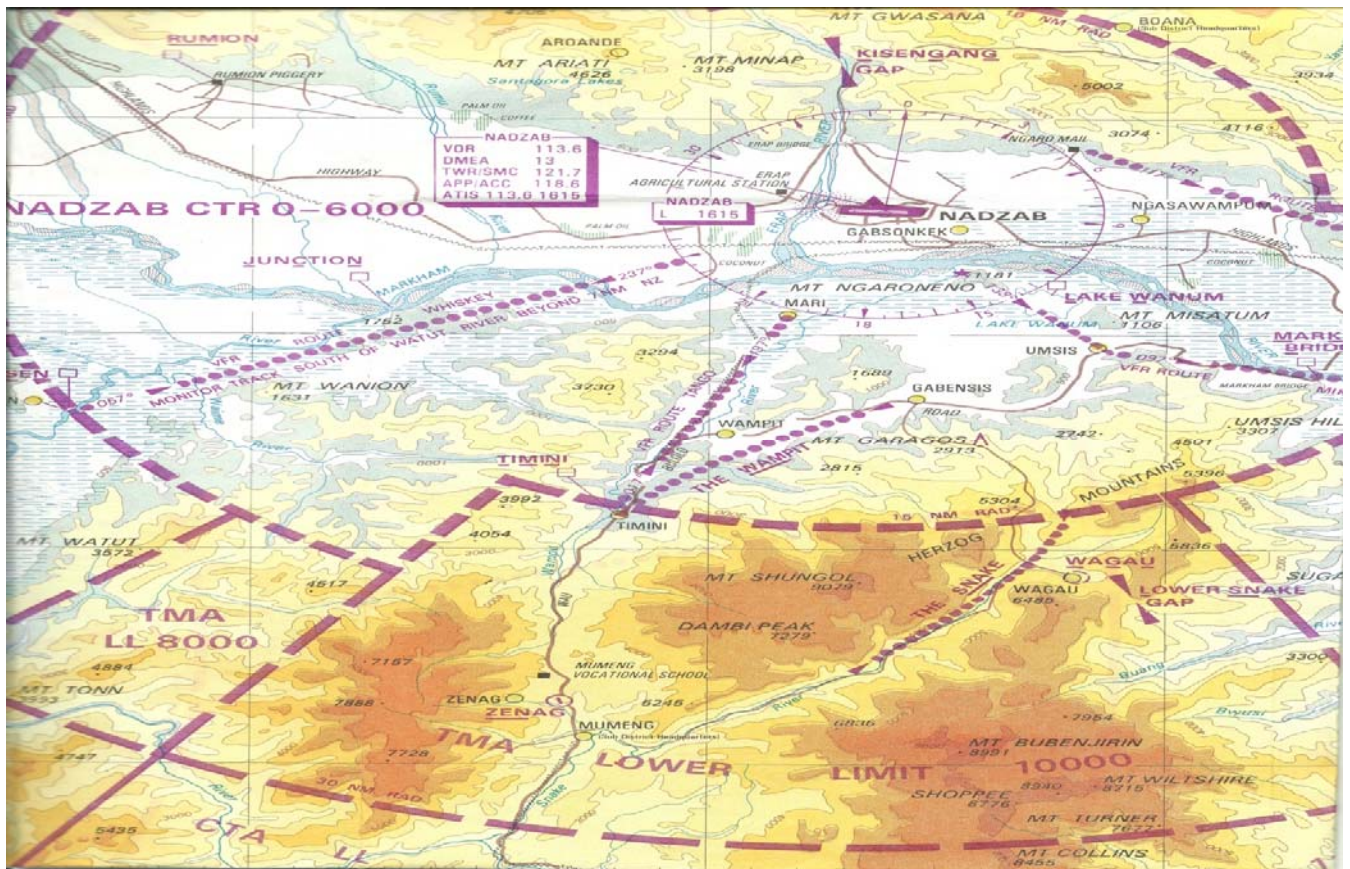
HISTORY OF THE FLIGHT

The aircraft was operating around the Hidden Valley area of PNG on contractual charter work associated with mining operations in the general area. The aircraft departed Nazdab at 0818 Hours LMT with 3 POB bound for Hidden Valley tracking via the Timini reporting point cruising not above 7000 FT estimating Hidden Valley at 0843. The pilot was unable to land at Hidden valley due to low cloud and poor visibility and subsequently revised his destination to Bulolo estimating there at 0848 Hours.

The two passengers on board were armed guards employed by a local security company contracted for the mining company's security operations.

At 0855 the aircraft reported at Bulolo cancelling SAR.

The aircraft remained on the ground at Bulolo and while there the pilot contacted a close personal friend to advise them that he was departing Bulolo and returning to Lae and not Nazdab as indicated on the flight plan. The aircraft reported departure at 1020 Hours tracking via Timini estimating Lae at 1050 Hours cruising not above 2000 FT. Timini is a mandatory reporting point located on the Nazdab control zone boundary where the aircraft was expected to report to Air Traffic Control for an airways clearance.



MAP SHOWING THE INTENDED FLIGHT

The aircraft failed to report at Timini resulting in a Distress Search and Rescue Phase being declared at 1152. Another aircraft operating in the area subsequently located the accident site when the pilot saw smoke rising from dense bushlands on a steep mountain side.

The company had equipped the aircraft with an independent tracking device which sent satellite signals at approximately three minute intervals or when there was an aircraft heading change. A review of this information later determined that the aircraft was tracking in a generally north westerly direction toward Timini at 4300 FT. The recorded airspeed at that time was 110 Knots. It has been estimated that the accident occurred at approximately 1033 Hours.

A ground party search later determined that the accident was a high velocity event and that there had been no survivors.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

The pilot of RUH was unable to complete the flights as nominated on the flight plan due to the adverse weather conditions in the area. When the aircraft was unable to track to the Hidden Valley mine site, the pilot diverted to Bulolo where it remained on the ground until the local conditions had improved.

The charter flight to the mine site was cancelled due to the weather conditions which resulted in the pilot departing Bulolo at 1020 Hours tracking for Lae. The flight partially transits the Nazdab controlled airspace where the pilot was required to report to ATC at Timini for an airways clearance.

The aircraft failed to report at the reporting point and the aircraft was reported as being overdue. At 1152 Hours a DISTRESS SAR Phase was declared by ATC and a search began for the missing aircraft. The electronic locator beacon failed to operate on impact.

Another aircraft operating in the same general area was dispatched for a search where the pilot saw thick smoke coming from bushlands on a steep mountain side. This was identified as the accident site.



GENERAL VIEW OF THE ACCIDENT SITE

The recovery of those who perished on board was not able to be carried out for a further two days due to the adverse weather conditions. The Authority responsible for the recovery operation was the RCC within PNG Air Services Limited.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The pilot was an Australian male Expatriate who held a current PNG Commercial Helicopter licence number P 20467. He had operated in PNG for many years and had accumulated approximately 17500 Hours of flight time. The pilot had recently been trained to operate the BO 105 aircraft type by an overseas operator.

His total flight time on the aircraft type was approximately 40 Hours.

PILOT MEDICAL

The pilot was 73 years of age and held a current Class One medical certificate that was issued on the 10.3.2011. The certificate was valid until 10.9.2011.

Further details to be advised.

THE AIRCRAFT

Details of the aircraft engine and airframe maintenance are yet to be obtained as they are enroute to PNG from the maintenance provider who is located in Cairns Australia.

AIRCRAFT OWNER	Manalos Aviation Ltd PO Box 80 NEW RABAUL PAPUA NEW GUINEA
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THE WEATHER

The weather situation in the area at the time of the accident was being influenced by a predominantly south easterly air flow due to the current synoptic situation affecting the southern regions of the Australian continent.

The mountainous regions to the south of Nazdab Aerodrome were being affected by these windy conditions that caused towering cloud development along the ridge tops lying to the west of the pilots track. Associated with these developments, areas of low cloud formed down in the adjacent valleys making visual flight difficult for aircraft.

The towering clouds caused areas of rain and rain showers with periods of reduced in flight visibility.

The pilot lodged a flight plan with the authorities for the days flights but the first two had to be amended due to the adverse weather conditions in the general area.

NAZDAB WEATHER

The Nazdab Control Tower recorded the weather conditions at the aerodrome at 0942 Hours as follows;

Duty runway	09
Wind	Light easterly
QNH	1013
CLOUD	Fog 1000FT, Scattered Cumulus 3000 FT, Overcast above
VISIBILITY	Ok

ON GOING INVESTIGATION ACTIVITIES

- . Aircraft maintenance records examination
 - . Specialist examination of instrumentation and the on board GPS equipment.
 - . Obtain expert opinion on the wind effect experienced by the aircraft during the final turning manoeuvre prior to impact.
 - . Examine the conduct of the RCC and their response to the accident notification.
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