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Safety recommendation: AIC 20-R13/20-1001.

Addressed to: The Minister for Civil Aviation

Date issued: 12 August 2020

Investigation link: AIC 20-1001

Action status: Active

Introduction

On 24th January 2020, Civil Aviation Safety Authority of Papua New Guinea (CASA PNG) notified the Papua New Guinea Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) of the accident referenced in this safety recommendation. Immediately after the notification, the AIC commenced an investigation and appointed a team of investigators to carry on the process.

Occurrence

On 14 November 2019 at 09:42 local time, a DJI Matrice 210 RTK remotely piloted aircraft (RPA), owned and operated by Applus Wokman (Applus), was being used to conduct an inspection of the underside of the jetty of the PNG LNG ExxonMobil Marine Terminal, about 20 km (11 nautical miles) North West of Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, when it collided with one of the jetty's pylons and dropped into the sea.

The accident occurred during a flight conducted by Applus as part of the contract they had with ExxonMobil PNG to conduct aerial inspections, from 1 to 28 November 2019, of ExxonMobil's marine navigational aids and the marine terminal jetty.

The aircraft was recovered about 20 minutes after the accident. The aircraft's internal hardware and electronic systems were destroyed by salt water.

Safety deficiency description

The investigation found that the *PNG CAR Part 101* does not contain requirements for notification of RPA occurrences. The investigation also found that the *CAR Part 12* sections associated with notification, investigation, and reporting of accident and incident, do not include requirements for RPA conducted under *CAR Part 101*.

On 22 January 2020, during a meeting between CASA PNG and ExxonMobil PNG, the occurrence was taken into CASA PNG attention. CASA PNG notification procedure to AIC was in accordance with the *Section 62* of the Civil Aviation Act 2000 (As Amended), notifying AIC on 24 January 2020.

AIC immediately commenced investigation into the occurrence after receiving notification from CASA PNG.

During the investigation, it was noticed that the operator notified Australian authorities about the occurrence, which was in accordance with its Operations Manual. It was also observed that the operator did not have provisions to notify PNG relevant authorities, neither was it required to do so by the rules.

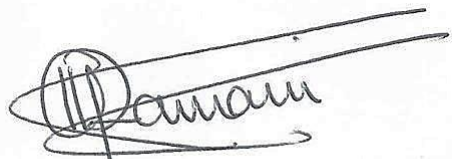
The AIC determined that due to the lack of notification provisions in the Civil Aviation Rules regarding RPA occurrences, operators are not obliged to notify the relevant authorities whenever there is an RPA occurrence.

Recommendation number AIC 20-R13/20-1001 to the Minister for Civil Aviation

The PNG Accident Investigation Commission recommends that the Minister for Civil Aviation should include provisions for notifying accidents and incidents involving remotely piloted aircraft in the appropriate Civil Aviation Rules, to ensure that in such an event, timely notification is made by operators of remotely piloted aircraft to the relevant PNG authorities.

Action requested

The PNG Accident Investigation Commission requests that the Minister for Civil Aviation note the recommendation *AIC 20-R13/20-1002* and provide a response to the PNG AIC within 90 days, but no later than 10 November 2020, and explain including with evidence how the Minister has addressed the safety deficiency identified in *Safety Recommendation AIC 20-R13/20-1001*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hubert Namani', with a large circular flourish at the end.

Hubert Namani, LLB
Chief Commissioner
12 August 2020

AIC Assessment of action taken to address the Safety Recommendation.

On 2 November 2021, following a *Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM)* program, CASA PNG published *Civil Aviation Rule Part 102.7* titled *Notification and reporting of occurrences*.

The AIC has assessed this safety action and assigns the CASA action to the Safety Recommendation AIC 20-R13/20-1001 addressed to the Minister for Civil Aviation on 12 August 2020 as *fully satisfactory* rating.

The AIC has recorded the **Status of the Recommendation: CLOSED.**



Capt. Aria Bouraga, MBE

Acting Chief Commissioner

30 March 2022