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Safety recommendation: AIC 20-R 26/19-1003

Addressed to: CASA PNG

Date issued: 2 October 2020

Investigation link: AIC 19-1003

Action status: Issued

Introduction

On 13 September 2019, at about 01:15 UTC (11:15 local time), an Airbus Helicopter BK117 C-1, registered P2-TAH, owned by Southern Cross Aircraft Engineering (SCAE) and operated by Tribal Aurora Helicopters (TAH) was on a VFR positioning flight from Buka Airport, Autonomous Region of Bouganville to Tokua Airport, East New Britain Province, Papua New Guinea, when it impacted water approximately 2.7 nautical miles (nm) South East of Silur, New Ireland Province.

At 02:27 UTC (12:27 local time), the AIC received information from Manolos Aviation about the accident and at 04:31, PNG Air Services Limited (ASL) notified AIC by providing an Initial Notification Incident (INI) Report. At that time PNG AIC commenced its Investigation in accordance with PNG legislation, Civil Aviation Act (As Amended 2016) and ICAO Annex 13 standards.

Occurrence

On 13 September 2019, at about 01:15 UTC (11:15 local time), an Airbus Helicopter BK117 C-1, registered P2-TAH, owned by Southern Cross Aircraft Engineering (SCAE) and operated by Tribal Aurora Helicopters (TAH) was on a VFR positioning flight from Buka Airport, Autonomous Region of Bouganville to Tokua Airport, East New Britain Province, Papua New Guinea.

The investigation revealed that during flight, the pilot encountered deteriorated weather conditions. Subsequently, he tried to divert but weather was further deteriorating as the flight progressed, to an extent in which the pilot was unable to maintain visual references.

While the pilot was maneuvering to visual references, the aircraft descended and impacted the water approximately 2.7 nautical miles (nm) South East of Silur Airstrip, New Ireland Province.

Safety deficiency description

During the investigation it was noted that Tribal Aurora Helicopters Flight Operations Manual was not aligned with the relevant provisions of the PNG CASA Rules, CAR Part 91 and 136.

Recommendation number AIC 20-R 26/19-1003 to CASA PNG

The Accident Investigation Commission recommends that Tribal Aurora Helicopters review and amend its Flight Operations Manual to ensure it is completely aligned with the relevant provisions of the PNG Civil Aviation Rules including, but not limited to, CAR Part 91 and CAR Part 136 as applicable.

Action Requested

The AIC requests that Tribal Aurora Helicopters note recommendation AIC 20- R26/19-1003, and provide a response to the AIC within 90 days, but no later than 2/1/2021, and explain including evidence how Tribal Aurora Helicopters has addressed the safety deficiency identified in the safety recommendation

Status of the AIC Safety Recommendation: Open



HUBERT NAMANI
Chief Commissioner

Civil Aviation Safety Authority safety action

Following a CASA PNG - AIC meeting on 2 August 2021, the AIC wrote to CASA on 5 August 2021 requesting evidence in support of safety action taken by CASA to address the safety deficiency noted in Safety Recommendation AIC 20-R26/19-1003.

CASA subsequently sent the AIC copies of the following compliance matrices that were completed for Tribal Aurora Helicopters at the initial Air Operators Certificate certification:

- CASR Part 100 QMS and SMS
- CASDR Part 119/136 Maintenance Control Manual
- CASR Part 119/136 Flight Operations

PNG Accident Investigation Commission assessment of the response from CASA PNG.

The AIC reviewed the documents and assessed that they fully addressed the safety deficiency noted in Safety Recommendation AIC 20-R26/19-1003.

The AIC assigned this response as *fully satisfactory* rating.

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



Capt. Aria Bouraga, MBE
Acting Chief Commissioner

21 March 2022