



AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

				Reference:	CA18/2/3/8141	
Aircraft Registration	ZS-HIA	Date of Accident	12 June 2006		Time of Accident	1644Z
Type of Aircraft	Bell 206B III		Type of Operation	Private		
Pilot-in-command Licence Type	Commercial	Age	39	Licence Valid	Yes	
Pilot-in-command Flying Experience	Total Flying Hours	3 557.0		Hours on Type	95.0	
Last point of departure	Nelspruit Aerodrome (FANS)					
Next point of intended landing	House No. 13 Lake Longmere Country Estates near White River					
Location of the accident site with reference to easily defined geographical points (GPS readings if possible)						
Crash into the water at Lake Longmere (GPS position: South 25°27.424' East 031°00.179' elevation ± 3 000ft)						
Meteorological Information	No wind reported, Temperature; 20°C, Cloud cover; one octas (1/8), Full moon					
Number of people on board	1 + 0	No. of people injured	0	No. of people killed	0	
Synopsis						
<p>The pilot, who was the sole occupant onboard the helicopter was engaged in a private flight from Nelspruit aerodrome to his residence, which was located at the Lake Longmere Country Estates, approximately 10km north of White River. His residence is located next to the lake with the landing zone in front of his house adjacent to the water.</p> <p>The approach for landing was conducted during night-time conditions without any lights on the surface to guide or to assist the pilot due to a prevailing power failure in the area. According to the pilot and an eye-witness on the ground, he over flew his residence, where after he turned out right, to position himself for the landing. The final approach phase of the flight was flown over the water in a westerly direction with the landing light switched on.</p> <p>According to the pilot he lost visual reference to the surface during the approach and became disorientated, which resulted in a loss of control and he crashed into the water, approximately 100m from the shore. The helicopter rolled over (inverted attitude) and immediately started to sink. The pilot managed to free himself from the cabin/cockpit area and swam to shore.</p> <p>The helicopter was recovered from the water the following day after it was floated and towed by boat to the Lowveld Angling Club jetty from where it was lifted out of the water by crane and placed onto a truck. The main rotor assembly was severed from the main rotor drive shaft during the impact sequence and was not recovered.</p> <p>Although the pilot held a valid commercial helicopter pilot's license he was not the holder of a night rating and was therefore not rated to fly at night.</p> <p>The last Mandatory Period Inspection (MPI) prior to the accident was certified on 26 May 2006 at 7 384.4 airframe hours. Since the inspection was certified a further 28.9 hours were flown.</p>						
Probable Cause						
<p>The pilot lost visual reference with the surface during an attempt to land at night in an area concealed in darkness and became disorientated, lost control of the helicopter and crashed into the water/lake.</p>						
IARC Date				Release Date		