

AAIB Bulletin No: 4/93

Ref: EW/G93/01/10

Category: 2c

Aircraft Type and Registration: Hughes 369D, G-BHST

No & Type of Engines: 1 Allison 250-C20B turboshaft engine

Year of Manufacture: 1980

Date & Time (UTC): 22 January 1993 at 1519 hrs

Location: Cranfield Airfield, Bedfordshire

Type of Flight: Private

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: One main rotor blade detached, resultant damage to main rotor drive shaft, transparencies, upper cowling, and landing gear dampers

Commander's Licence: Private Pilot's Licence (Helicopters) with Night rating

Commander's Age: 38 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 404 hours (of which 230 were on type)
Last 90 days - 25 hours
Last 28 days - 7 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The helicopter was about to depart for a flight to a private landing site near Bromsgrove. The commander stated that he failed to remove the main rotor tie-down prior to entering the aircraft. He then engaged the starter in order to start the engine. The rotor blade that was tied down broke at the root end, causing further damage as it was dragged round over the cabin roof before detaching and being thrown some 50 feet from the helicopter. Further damage was caused by the excessive vibration in the out of balance condition that then existed.

The commander shut down the engine, disembarked, and replaced the tie-down on a remaining blade. He commented that earlier in the day, he had carried out a thorough pre-flight check of the helicopter. He attributed the tie-down oversight to a failure to clear the subject of some recently conducted business from his mind before the flight.