

Sikorsky S76A (Modified), G-BVKR

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INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration: Sikorsky S76A (Modified), G-BVKR
No & Type of Engines: 2 Arriel 1S turboshaft engines
Year of Manufacture: 1980
Date & Time (UTC): 13 September 1998 at 0744 hrs
Location: En route to North Denes, Norfolk
Type of Flight: Oil exploration/production support
Persons on Board: Crew - 2 - Passengers - 11
Injuries: Crew - None - Passengers - None
Nature of Damage: Several punctures in horizontal stabiliser
Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence (Helicopters)
Commander's Age: 55 years
Commander's Flying Experience: 11,819 hours (of which 490 were on type)
Last 90 days - 102 hours
Last 28 days - 50 hours
Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

While en route to North Denes, having de-manned an offshore platform, the co-pilot informed the commander that he could hear an unusual external noise but the commander was unable to hear it. On short finals at North Denes, the Air Traffic Controller informed the crew that they 'had something hanging off the back of the aircraft'. The helicopter was hover taxied to dispersal and shutdown without incident. Nothing was found to be hanging from the back of the aircraft but damage to the horizontal stabiliser confirmed that the Air Traffic report had been correct. Subsequently, an aircraft cargo strop was retrieved from the runway.

The commander considered that the cause of the accident was the inadvertent dislodgement of the cargo strap from the baggage compartment while the helicopter was boarding passengers on the unmanned platform without the assistance of a Helicopter Landing Officer on departure. The strap had fallen onto the landing gear door and become trapped when the landing gear was raised. Subsequent flailing whilst in flight had caused the damage to the horizontal stabiliser and the noise heard by the co-pilot.