

Aircraft type and registration: SA315B Alouette III Lama G-BMUB

No & Type of engines: 1 Turbomeca Artouste III B turbine engine

Year of Manufacture: 1975

Date and time (UTC): 4 September 1987 at 1530 hrs

Location: Rashiegrain, Teviothead, Roxburghshire, Scotland

Type of flight: Aerial application

Persons on board: Crew — 1 Passengers — None

Injuries: Crew — None Passengers — N/A

Nature of damage: Tip of one main rotor blade damaged and the 'A' frame of the fertiliser hopper was cut

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence (Helicopters)

Commander's Age: 40 years

Commander's Total Flying Experience: 6234 hours rotary wing (of which 1806 were on type)

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot.

During the course of a crop dressing task, the helicopter was marshalled in to land by one of the team loaders, whilst another watched the tail rotor. When the aircraft came to rest with the engine running at ground-idle, the main rotor overlapped both the fuel trailer and the hopper trailer, but there was a vertical clearance of 2 feet.

About two minutes later, the ground handler was seen to approach the hopper nearest to the aircraft and lift its 'A' frame into the turning rotor blades. There was a loud bang, the handler was thrown to the ground, and the helicopter started vibrating. The pilot shut down the engine.

The handler had sustained a fractured wrist and a cut on the side of his head. The 'A' frame had been severed from the hopper and the tip of one rotor blade was missing.