

Aircraft type and registration: Sikorsky S61N G-BIHH (Heavy helicopter — public transport)

Year of Manufacture: 1974

Date and time (GMT): 2 December 1985 at 1050 hrs

Location: MCP 1 Platform, North Sea

Type of flight: Airline non-scheduled passenger/cargo

Persons on board: Crew — 2 Passengers — 15

Injuries: Crew — None Passengers — None

Nature of damage: Skin of horizontal stabiliser pierced and stabiliser displaced through 45°

Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence

Commander's Age: 25 years

Commander's Total Flying Experience: 2565 hours (of which 1571 were on type)

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

The helicopter was departing from an unrestricted fixed platform helideck. Hover checks were completed with the aircraft facing into a 35 kt gusting wind. The co-pilot, who was handling, initiated a vertical climb. At a height of 20 to 30 feet above the deck and at the point at which the aircraft was to be rotated into forward flight the crew felt a judder from the rear of the aircraft. The take off was continued and a tight circuit was flown, followed by a landing back on the platform. During this manoeuvre the helicopter handled and behaved normally.

After shut down and passenger disembarkation an examination of the helicopter revealed that the horizontal stabiliser on the starboard side of the tail pylon had contacted the platform's radar antenna tower.