



aircraft broke cloud and levelled at 800 feet, en-route to Unst, some 30 nm west.

A coastguard S61 Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopter was already airborne on exercise in the Thistle Field, some 80 nm distant, and was vectored towards ZH. The SAR Bell 212 was also launched from Unst. At 1508 hrs, the Bell 212 made visual contact with ZH and escorted it to Unst.

The surface wind at Unst was 330/20—28 kt. This greatly assisted a straight-in run-on landing on runway 33. A successful landing was made in accordance with the "Tail Rotor Control Failure" drill and the touchdown made without use of the yaw pedals or the collective lever. Directional control was maintained using the nose-wheel lock and the brakes when required.

Initial examination of the aircraft, after landing, showed that the centre portion of the trailing edge of one tail rotor blade was missing and that the structure of the inclined pylon, just below the tail rotor gearbox mounting, was partially failed.

More detailed investigation showed that a part of the channel section which lies under the opening edge of the inclined driveshaft fairing had become detached and fallen free. There was evidence that this part had struck the leading edge of two successive tail rotor blades, wrapping round the second blade and damaging its trailing edge sufficiently to cause part of it to become separated. The piece of channel which separated had only recently been fitted, replacing a part which had become severely worn in service.

The Chief Inspector of Accidents has ordered that an Inspectors Investigation be conducted into this accident.