

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Robinson R22 Beta, G-OHSL	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-320-B2C piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1989	
Date & Time (UTC):	30 January 2008 at 1415 hrs	
Location:	Field 6 miles south-south-west Shobdon Airfield	
Type of Flight:	Training	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 2	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Severe damage: tail rotor section detached, main rotor crumpled, cockpit destroyed	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	36 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	1,500 hours (of which 1,100 were on type) Last 90 days - 88 hours Last 28 days - 23 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

During the flare recovery manoeuvre at the end of a practice forced landing, the helicopter made contact with the ground. The ground was soft and the helicopter skids sank into the mud, causing the helicopter to pitch forward. The main rotor blades struck the ground, and the helicopter turned over, coming to rest on its left side.

History of the flight

The instructor was flying with a pilot who held a CPL(H), but who needed a 28-day currency check in order to comply with the company's self-fly hire policy. The weather conditions were good, with a light westerly wind and excellent visibility. The initial elements of the flight went as planned and the crew progressed to

practising forced landings (PFL's) from 2,000 ft agl. The first PFL was flown uneventfully to an overshoot at 700 ft agl, and the helicopter was repositioned back to 2,000 ft for a further PFL. The crew had briefed that the objective of this exercise was to assess correctly the height for the initiation of the flare, and the intention was to level the helicopter and increase the power without making contact with the ground. After carrying out the necessary checks and applying full carburettor heat, the pilot commenced the second PFL.

The instructor was content with the handling pilot's choice of field so he instructed him to continue and to tell him when he judged that the height was correct

to commence the flare. The handling pilot indicated that he thought that he should commence the flare at approximately 150 ft agl. The instructor considered that this was too early, so he took control and initiated the flare at height of about 40 ft. As the flare effect diminished, the instructor raised the collective lever but the helicopter continued to sink and the skids made contact with the soft ground. The skids sank into the mud, rapidly slowing the helicopter, which then pitched forward. The main rotor blades made contact with the

ground and the helicopter turned over, coming to rest on its left side. The instructor switched off the electrics and both pilots vacated the helicopter through the right door.

The instructor considered that the accident occurred because he did not increase the power in sufficient time to prevent the skids from touching down on the muddy field.