



INDUSTRY SAFETY ALERT

Helicopter Engine Failure

Date of Incident: February 2024

Details: A Bell 206B Jet Ranger helicopter was being utilized to conduct bighorn sheep surveys in the Taseko Mountain area when it experienced engine failure.

Carrying three passengers and the pilot, the helicopter autorotated to a successful landing that was described as "soft". There were no injuries to those onboard and no damage to the aircraft, due in large part to the skills and experience of the pilot.

Using an InReach device approximately 4 minutes after the incident the crew connected with their safety check-in person, confirming there were no injuries and requesting helicopter pick-up.

The Prince George Fire Centre (PGFC), working in conjunction with the safety check-in person, re-tasked two commercial helicopters working in the region to respond to the incident and complete the crew recovery.

The Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) was manually activated by the pilot during the autorotation descent.

The Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) was notified through communication with PGFC but did not mobilize a response since the crew had made contact confirming no injuries, and sufficient resources had been mobilized for crew recovery.

The passengers and pilot were safely recovered, flown to Williams Lake and transported to hospital for check-up.

Contributing Factor: The pilot reports that at elevation the Jet Ranger is incapable of hovering and must maintain forward momentum to complete surveys and is operating at 100% power output.





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Key Notables:

- The pilot's autorotation and soft touchdown and communications using the WLRS staff InReach device contributed to a successful outcome.
- The rapid recovery of uninjured staff is a successful outcome however staff have indicated that the possibility of overnighing at the site would create additional health and safety risks, and that staff utilizing helicopters could be better prepared.

Suggested Actions:

- Workers involved in airborne operations should receive passenger training outlining general helicopter safety and emergency procedures in the event of engine failure, autorotation or a forced landing.
- Create "survival bags" that workers can take with them to ensure adequate First Aid and survival supplies if injuries occur, or if a crew was required to overnigh in a remote location.
- Ensure personal clothing is appropriate for an unplanned overnigh situation in seasonal weather conditions.
- Ensure all crew members have alternate means of communication with their personal safety check-in person - for example InReach device - on their person during work-related flights.
- Consider providing flight helmets and flight vests for inventory work crew to keep communication equipment on their person.
- Ensure the aircraft is appropriate to the elevation and type of work being performed.

This information shared courtesy of the Government of British Columbia's Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

