

AAIB Bulletin No: 7/95 **Ref:** EW/G95/05/26 **Category:** 2.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Aerospatiale AS350B2 Ecureuil, G-PLMH

No & Type of Engines: 1 Arriel 1D1 turboshaft engine

Year of Manufacture: 1988

Date & Time (UTC): 23 May 1995 at 0930 hrs

Location: Near Stornoway

Type of Flight: Aerial Work

Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - None

Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - N/A

Nature of Damage: Propeller blade damaged and Starflex arm broken; tail boom kinked and main fuselage wrinkled; engine and transmission shock loaded

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

Commander's Age: 44 years

Commander's Flying Experience: 6,200 hours (of which 2,500 were on type)
Last 90 days - 65 hours
Last 28 days - 23 hours

Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and enquiries by the AAIB

The pilot was involved in transferring underslung loads to a field site; the weather was good with a surface wind of 180°/10 kt. After approximately 25 minutes work, the pilot manoeuvred to deposit an underslung load. His previous load had been retrieved from the large polyester bag used to protect the contents, and the empty bag, net and strop were positioned on the ground ready to be placed inside the aircraft for the next run; the empty bag had been folded up and was under the net and strop. The pilot released his load and then positioned G-PLMH for landing. He was then approximately 6 metres to the east of his released load and about 8 metres to the north west of the empty bag. As he approached the touchdown point, he was monitoring the various ground items and did not notice any undue movement. However, as he touched down, he was suddenly aware that the empty bag had inflated and was airborne. Almost immediately it was drawn into his main rotor and the helicopter started vibrating. The pilot shut down the engine and secured G-PLMH.