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COMISIÓN DE
INVESTIGACIÓN
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AVIACIÓN **C**IVIL

Interim Statement IN-012/2011

Incident involving a PZL W-3A,
PZL W-3AS helicopter,
registration SP-SUH, operated
by LPU Heliseco sp. z o.o.,
in the municipality of Mijares
(Ávila), on 11 April 2011



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SUBSECRETARÍA

COMISIÓN DE INVESTIGACIÓN
DE ACCIDENTES E INCIDENTES
DE AVIACIÓN CIVIL

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Foreword

This document constitutes the interim statement envisioned in Article 16.7 of Regulation (EU) no. 996/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as well as in paragraph 6.6 of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation. The statement includes the details of the progress of the investigation and the most important operational safety issues revealed to date. The information provided herein is subject to change as the investigation proceeds.

Pursuant to the contents of Regulation (EU) no. 96/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council and of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, the investigation is purely technical in nature and is not intended to determine or apportion blame or liability. The investigation is being conducted without necessarily resorting to evidentiary procedures and for the sole purpose of preventing future accidents.

Consequently, the use of this information for any purpose other than to prevent future accidents may result in faulty conclusions or interpretations.

Abbreviations

ATPL(H)	Airline Transport Pilot License (Helicopter)
FEL	Flight Engineer Licence
h	Hour(s)

DATA SUMMARY

LOCATION

Date and time	Monday, 11 April 2011; 14:00 local time
Site	Mijares (Ávila)

AIRCRAFT

Registration	SP-SUH
Type and model	PZL W-3A, PZL W-3AS
Operator	LPU Heliseco sp. z o.o.

Engines

Type and model	PZL-10W
Number	2

CREW

	Pilot in command	Flight Engineer
Age	52 years old	59 years old
Licence	ATPL(H)	FEL (Flight Engineer Licence)
Total flight hours	7,554 h	1,200 h
Flight hours on the type	2,955 h	1,200 h

INJURIES

	Fatal	Serious	Minor/None
Crew			2
Passengers			
Third persons			

DAMAGE

Aircraft	Minor
Third parties	None

FLIGHT DATA

Operation	General aviation – Other – Test
Phase of flight	En route – Cruise

REPORT

Date of approval	3rd May 2012
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1. SUMMARY OF EVENT

On 11 April 2011, a PZL W-3AS helicopter, registration SP-SUH, took off from the aerodrome of La Iglesiasuela (Toledo) on a test flight following maintenance activities. During the flight, the two crewmembers heard a strange noise coming from the engine area and noticed that the cockpit was filling with smoke. The crew decided to perform an emergency landing on a road, which was the most suitable area they could find.

Upon exiting the helicopter, they saw smoke and fire emanating from the air intakes on the engines, which they extinguished using the onboard fire extinguishers.

2. INVESTIGATION AND PROGRESS

In keeping with the aircraft's maintenance program, the 25-, 50-, 100- and 300-h periodic inspections had been performed simultaneously, after which a test flight must be conducted before the return of service certificate can be issued.

The aircraft's records show that at the time of the event, it had 3,107 flight hours and that it had only flown one hour since the previous maintenance activity, performed four months earlier. The aircraft had a valid airworthiness certificate and the crew was properly licensed and qualified for the flight.

An inspection of the aircraft after the incident revealed several broken components in the cooling system for the air intake for the engines, resulting in a misalignment of the axis of rotation, which led to friction within the air intakes and to the ensuing fire and smoke.

Among the maintenance tasks performed as part of the 300-h inspection was a check of the alignment of the drive shaft on the fan and an inspection of its blades and their coupling nuts. Likewise, the 100-h and/or annual inspection includes tasks to lubricate parts of the air intake cooling system.

The affected components (fan, radiators, fan bearings and drive shaft, and its clutch) were subjected to a post-incident visual inspection at the manufacturer's facility in Poland, which revealed the need for further testing of said components.

Aspects involving the performance of the maintenance tasks are also being investigated to determine whether they contributed to the incident.

Once these additional tests and analyses are completed, the final report will be written and published.

