



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th and Independence Svs SW
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 5720

Date: October 1, 2002

Route To: 6730

Subject: 24 and 72 Hour Briefing
AS 350 B3 Mishap, Bishop CA
September 29, 2002

To: Regional Forester, Pacific Southwest Region

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Name of injured or deceased: None

Preliminary factual findings and narrative: During before takeoff hydrolic accumulator test, the collective lock inadvertantly released which allowed the helicopter collective pitch lever to increase and the helicopter became airborne with little or no hydrolic assist. Pilot was unable to control the helicopter, resulting in main and tail rotor strikes with ground. The helicopter came to rest on its right side. A small post crash fire near exhaust stack was quickly extinguished by a helitack crewmember that observed the mishap from the ground. Pilot, Helicopter Manager, and 2 helitack crewmembers exited the helicopter through the left side doors and were uninjured.

It appears the collective locking mechanism disengaged during the hydrolic test. The collective locking mechanism showed signs of wear.

Investigation is continuing.

/s/ John Exline, Team Leader

cc:
Official case file

