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PRELIMINARY ACCIDENT REPORT

This is preliminary information, subject to change, and may contain errors. Any errors in this Report will be corrected when the Final Report has been completed.

Report No:	2007-015
1. AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURER:	Aerospatiale (Eurocopter)
Model:	AS 350B1
State of Registry:	Ireland
Registration:	EI-IHL
Serial Number:	1963
Year of Manufacture:	1987
2. OPERATOR:	Irish Helicopters Ltd
3. TYPE OF OPERATION:	Aerial Work
4. DATE / TIME:	12 July 2007 @ 11.23 hrs UTC
5. POSITION OF OCCURRENCE:	Ballynacally, County Clare
6. PERSONS ON BOARD:	Crew: 2 Passengers: nil
7. INJURIES:	Crew: 2, (1 fatal) Passengers: nil
8. DAMAGE:	The helicopter was destroyed
9. INVESTIGATOR-IN-CHARGE:	Mr Leo Murray

The Air Accident Investigation Unit is presently conducting an Investigation into an accident concerning a helicopter which crashed while carrying out a routine gas-pipeline inspection under contract to the Gas Supplier. The helicopter, operating at low altitude, crashed in farmland to the west of the village of Ballynacally in County Clare. The Observer, who was occupying the left-hand seat, was fatally injured.

The helicopter concerned was powered by a single Arriel 1D turbine engine, Serial No. 7035. The wreckage was recovered to the AAIU facility at Gormanston in County Meath for examination. The engine was removed and taken to the Manufacturers' facility at Tarnos, France for detailed examination under the supervision of the AAIU. Opening of the transmission shaft and accessory gearbox revealed that the Bevel Gear of the Accessory Drive Train had disintegrated (see **Appendix A**).

The cause of this failure has yet to be determined. The direct effect of this failure was to stop the fuel supply, causing stoppage of the engine within seconds.

Due to the increased hazards associated with low-level Aerial Work operations, the investigation makes the following *Interim* Safety Recommendation:

Safety Recommendation SR No. 13 of 2007:

The Irish Aviation Authority review the suitability of single-engine helicopters operating on Aerial Work Permits engaged in low-level operations.

The Investigation is ongoing and a Final Report will be published in due course.

APPENDIX A

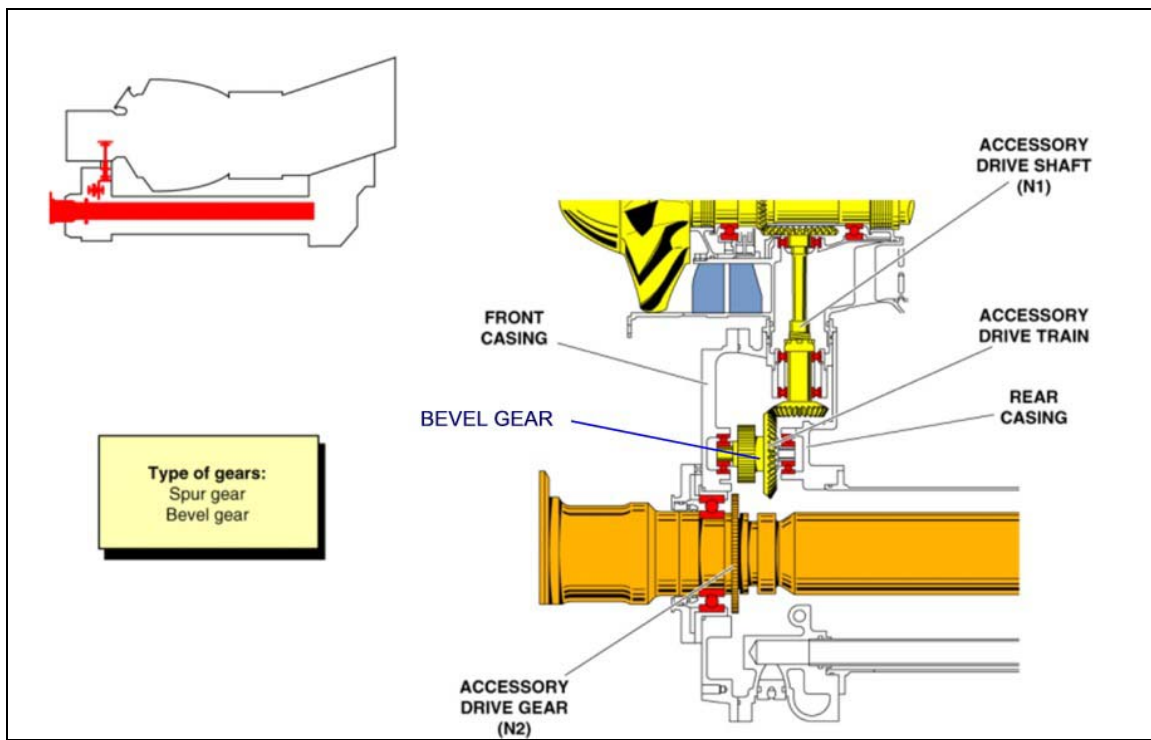


Fig. 1 Schematic of Arriel 1D accessory drive gearing



Fig. 2 Bevel gear fragments

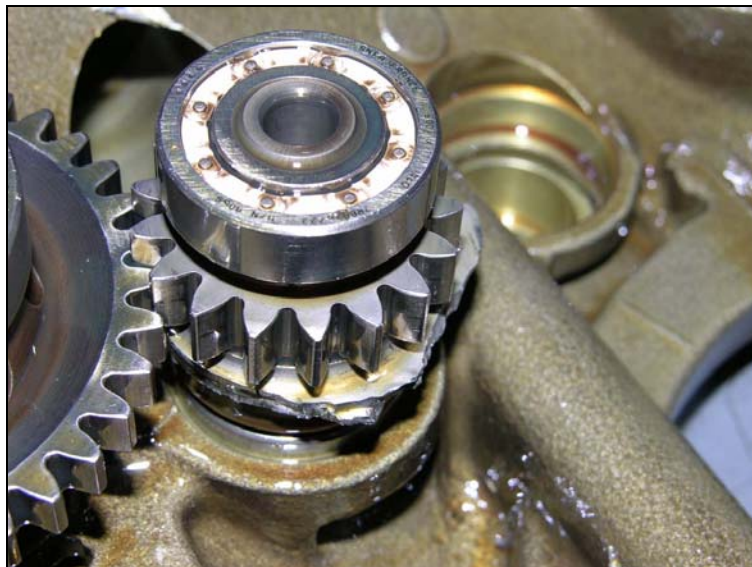


Fig. 3 Remains of bevel gear on accessory drive train

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