

## **STATEMENT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION**

### **Appointed Investigator to Arrive in Savusavu Morning of 5 August to Lead Investigation**

Mr Andrew McGregor has been appointed as the Investigator-in-charge of the Robinson R44, Registration DQ-HPT helicopter accident which occurred near Savusavu on Friday evening. He is scheduled to arrive in Savusavu the morning of 5 August to begin his investigations.

Mr McGregor is Director of Prosolve Ltd, a company based in NZ that specializes in forensic engineering and air accident investigation and he has extensive experience investigating aircraft accidents in Fiji. Mr McGregor recently carried out the investigation into the crash of a Cessna 172R aircraft, DQ-FTR in Fiji which identified inclement weather as a likely cause of the accident.

In 2006, he investigated the crash of a Robinson R44 helicopter that crashed into the sea West of Vuda point near Nadi due to dis-bonding of one of the main rotor blades. As a result of his investigation, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) of the United States issued 5 recommendations to the manufacturer of Robinson helicopters and the Federal Aviation Administration (FFA) in order to improve the design and manufacturing processes of future R44 main rotor blades. Following this accident, the manufacturer changed the design of the main rotor blades for the R44 helicopter.

"Sadly, we have confirmed at least one fatality of a passenger aboard the helicopter at the time of this horrific crash. Our search and rescue teams are working overtime to locate the other missing passenger and the pilot. On behalf of the Department of Civil Aviation and the Fijian people, we extend our deepest sympathies to all of the victim's families at this unimaginably difficult time," said Attorney-General Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum. "Investigations into the root cause of this tragedy are already underway and we have engaged Andrew McGregor to lead that ongoing investigation.

Mr McGregor is a reliable and experienced aircraft accident investigator with a solid track record of work in Fiji. We look forward to working closely with him to uncover how and why this crash occurred. We will keep the public regularly

updated on the progress of that investigation as well as the ongoing search and rescue effort."

The full accident report will be released to the public in due course.

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