



INTERIM STATEMENT

CHL/2024/01/20/INTR/02

Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau

Interim Statement on the serious incident involving a Leonardo S.p.A AW139 Helicopter with nationality and registration marks 5N-BSG operated by Caverton Helicopters Limited en route Bonga Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FPSO) Vessel which occurred on 20 January 2024.

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On 20 January, 2024 at about 07:53 h, a Leonardo S.P.A. AW139 Helicopter with nationality and registration marks 5N-BSG operated by Caverton Helicopters Limited departed Murtala Muhammed Airport, Lagos (DNMM) for Bonga Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FPSO); routing DNMM - Bonga FPSO – DS10 – DNMM) as a charter flight 360A on an Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) flight plan with 12 persons onboard, including 2 flight crew. The Captain was the Pilot Flying (PF) while the First Officer was the Pilot Monitoring (PM).

At 08:19 h, the flight crew reported reaching ETVOV - a waypoint on Radial 151° and 69 NM from Lagos, maintaining 2,500 ft on QNH. Shortly afterward, while cruising at 2,500 ft, the Crew Alerting System (CAS) displayed Auto Pilot 1 [AP1 FAIL] and Auto Pilot 1 [AP2 FAIL] messages. According to the flight crew, several unsuccessful attempts were made severally to clear the faults, including resetting controls and re-engaging the Automatic Flight Control System (AFCS). The Multi-Purpose Flight Recorder (MPFR) captured five disengagements and re-engagements of AP2 in a 2-minute period. Thereafter, the flight crew reset the MASTER GEN 1 & 2 Gang Bar to clear the faults. The flight crew stated that the [AP1 FAIL] message came ON followed by helicopter nose drop. The flight crew continued attempts to re-engage the Automatic Flight Control System (AFCS).

The helicopter experienced erratic altitude and attitude changes, including a climb to 3,500 ft, followed by rapid descent to 330 ft with significant Pitch and Roll variations. The Captain took control of the helicopter while the First Officer monitored instruments. After multiple corrective actions were taken by the flight crew, the AFCS was successfully reengaged with AP1 came ON, four seconds later AP2 came ON and the aircraft stabilized at 1,000 ft AGL.

The flight crew decided to divert back to Lagos. About 52 minutes, the helicopter

commenced descent and maintained 500 ft before safely landing at DNMM at 10:00 h. All passengers disembarked normally. Three passengers sustained minor injuries.

The incident occurred in daylight and Instrument Meteorological Conditions prevailed.

ACTION

The draft final report has been completed and submitted for proofreading. Upon completion of the proofreading, it will be sent to the relevant stakeholders for their comments in accordance with the requirements of Section 6.3 of ICAO Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

This interim report is being issued on the 2nd anniversary of the serious incident in accordance with the provisions of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

In accordance with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, the Nigerian Safety Investigation (Establishment) Act 2022, and the Civil Aviation (Investigation of Air Accidents and Incidents) Regulations 2026, the objective of this investigation is to prevent aviation accidents and serious incidents. It is not the purpose of any such investigation, nor of the associated investigation report, to apportion blame or liability.