



## NEWS RELEASE

### OCTOBER 26, 2024 BRIEFING: UPDATE ON HELICOPTER INCIDENT NEAR BONNY FINIMA

[Abuja, Nigeria, October 26, 2024]

The Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau (NSIB) continued its recovery operation and investigation into the ditching of a **Sikorsky SK76 helicopter**, registration **5N BQG**, operated by **Eastwind Aviation**. The incident, which occurred on **Thursday, October 24, 2024**, involved eight persons onboard and took place off the coast of Bonny Finima in the Atlantic Ocean.

As of **11:55 AM** today, divers began setting up and checking equipment to conduct an underwater search and recovery, followed by preliminary sweeping operations at **2:15 PM**. However, by **4:30 PM**, diving activities were suspended due to the loss of daylight. Recovery operations are set to resume tomorrow at **9:00 AM local time**. Despite extensive search efforts, no wreckage or critical components - such as the black box, **Flight Data Recorder (FDR)**, or **Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR)** - have yet been located due to the challenging conditions of the operating environment, limited visibility at depth and human divers' operational constraints.

To enhance recovery efforts, the NSIB is working to deploy a **Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV)** equipped to operate at depths of up to **1,000 meters**. With its advanced cameras, sensors, and **Tether Management System (TMS)**, the ROV will enable the NSIB team to conduct detailed surveys, collect environmental data, and capture critical evidence essential to understanding the cause of the incident. The ROV's capacity for close inspections and light

manipulation tasks will be invaluable in such deep-water environments, where it will aid in assessing wreckage conditions, gathering vital data, and developing insights into potential causes.

Captain Alex Badeh Jr., Director General of the NSIB, further expressed his sympathies to the loved ones of those affected, stating, “Our heartfelt condolences go out to the families and friends of the crew and passengers involved in this tragic event. We recognize the depth of this loss, and I assure you that all efforts are fully underway. Our priority is to recover and analyze all necessary data to bring clarity to the families and the nation.”

The NSIB is collaborating closely with an amalgamated team of search, rescue, and recovery units comprising various government agencies and private entities. The Bureau urges the public to avoid speculation, emphasizing the importance of respecting the integrity of the recovery and investigation as they progress.

The Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau remains steadfast in its commitment to transparency and accountability, continually working to enhance transportation safety across Nigeria.

**Mrs Bimbo Olawumi Oladeji**  
**Director, Public Affairs and Family Assistance,**  
**Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau**

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**About NSIB:** The Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau is the multimodal transport agency charged with the mandate of promoting transport safety and conducting objective, thorough, and accurate investigations into transport accidents and incidents in Nigeria with the aim of identifying the probable causes and advocating for safety improvements based on our findings.

For further enquiries or media requests, please contact NSIB through [info@nsib.gov.ng](mailto:info@nsib.gov.ng) and NSIB\_Nigeria on its social media platforms. The Bureau can also be reached on its emergency line +234-807-709-0909.