



NEWS RELEASE

OCTOBER 27, 2024 BRIEFING: UPDATE ON HELICOPTER DITCHING INCIDENT NEAR BONNY FINIMA

[Abuja, Nigeria, October 27, 2024]

*The Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau (NSIB) continued its coordinated effort in the recovery operation and investigation into the ditching incident involving 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.*

The following updates highlight today's significant developments:

- **10:30 AM:** Search, Rescue, and Recovery vessels **MV VOSINE**, **Ebok HD Steadfast**, **MV Pioneer**, and **Jacksparrow** departed **Ebok** for the **Antan field**.
- **1:40 PM:** **MV Albacore 5** was prepared to transport additional diving equipment for human divers, along with personnel to support recovery operations. The vessel departed at **4:45 PM** for the incident scene.
- **1:58 PM:** NSIB confirmed that two additional specialists would be deployed to the **NUIM Antan** incident site on **October 28, 2024**, to supervise and support the helicopter recovery effort.

- **2:50 PM:** The **Fast Rescue Craft (FRC)** was re-launched to facilitate recovery operations.
- **4:00 PM:** A floating body was retrieved from the water by the FRC and was escorted by the **Cameroonian Navy** to **NUIMS Antan**, for safe transit through their territorial waters.
- **4:00 PM:** The **HD Steadfast**, **HD Pioneer**, and an additional vessel arrived at the Antan location. The superintendent convened with the crew to discuss the area survey and diving operations began afterwards.
- **6:44 PM:** Field operations identified the body by confirming the T-shirt worn matched the description provided. Although it took time, photographic evidence confirmed the identity as the **fourth victim**.
- **6:50 PM:** **Eastwind Aviation** was contacted to arrange an air ambulance for transporting the body tomorrow morning, with Eastwind actively coordinating this effort.
- **7:05 PM:** **Antan Security** informed the **Port Harcourt Marine Police** to prepare for receiving the body from the air ambulance.

The NSIB is actively collaborating with a joint search, rescue, and recovery team, as well as various supporting agencies. These combined efforts are essential for ensuring a thorough and efficient recovery process and for gathering critical evidence to aid the investigation.

Captain Alex Badeh Jr., Director General of the NSIB, expressed appreciation for the joint support: “We are grateful for the coordinated support of national and international partners working alongside us in this challenging environment. Our thoughts remain with the families of those affected, and we are dedicated to gathering the essential information to provide clarity and closure.”

The Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau remains committed to upholding **transparency and accountability** in its investigations and working to advance 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 and NSIB_Nigeria on its social media platforms. The Bureau can also be reached on its emergency line +234-807-709-0909.