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## Interim statement A-024/2013

Accident involving a Eurocopter AS-350-B3  
aircraft, registration EC-KIE, operated  
by INAER, in Puebla del Maestre (Badajoz)  
on 4 August 2013



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DE ESPAÑA

MINISTERIO  
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SUBSECRETARÍA

COMISIÓN DE INVESTIGACIÓN  
DE ACCIDENTES E INCIDENTES  
DE AVIACIÓN CIVIL

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## **Important notice**

This document constitutes the interim statement envisioned in Article 16.7 of Regulation (EU) no. 996/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as well as in paragraph 6.6 of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation. The statement includes the details of the progress of the investigation and the most important operational safety issues revealed to date. The information provided herein is subject to change as the investigation proceeds.

Pursuant to the contents of Regulation (EU) no. 96/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council and of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, the investigation is purely technical in nature and is not intended to determine or apportion blame or liability. The investigation is being conducted without necessarily resorting to evidentiary procedures and for the sole purpose of preventing future accidents.

Consequently, the use of this information for any purpose other than to prevent future accidents may result in faulty conclusions or interpretations.

## Abreviaturas

CPL (H)	Commercial pilot license (Helicopter)
h	Hour(s)
LT	Local Time

**DATA SUMMARY****LOCATION**

Date and time	<b>Sunday, 4 August 2013 at 19:50 LT<sup>1</sup></b>
Lugar	<b>Municipal limits of Puebla del Maestre (Badajoz)</b>

**AIRCRAFT**

Registration	<b>EC-KIE</b>
Type and model	<b>EUROCOPTER AS-350-B3</b>
Operator	<b>Inaer</b>

**Engines**

Type and model	<b>Turbomeca Arriel 2B1</b>
Number	<b>1</b>

**CREW** Pilot

Age	<b>28 years</b>
License	<b>CPL (H) Commercial pilot license (helicopter)</b>
Total flight hours	<b>1250 h</b>
Flight hours on the type	<b>100 h</b>

**INJURIES**

	Fatal	Serious	Minor / None
Crew			<b>1</b>
Passengers			
Third persons			

**DAMAGE**

Aircraft	<b>Significant</b>
Third parties	<b>None</b>

**FLIGHT DATA**

Operation	<b>Aerial Work - Commercial - Firefighting</b>
Phase of flight	<b>Landing</b>

**REPORT**

Date of approval	<b>25 June 2014</b>
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<sup>1</sup> All times in this report are local unless otherwise specifically indicated. To obtain UTC subtract two hours to local time.





## 1. INFORMATION ON THE INCIDENT

On Sunday, 4 August 2013, a Eurocopter AS-350 B3, registration EC-KIE, was fighting a forest fire between the municipalities of Pallares and Llerena (Badajoz).

After executing several water drops, the pilot proceeded to the base in Calera de León (Badajoz) to refuel and take the required rest.

During his break he was told that the fire was under control, that no more water drops were needed and that he could return to his usual base, located in Valencia de Alcántara (Cáceres). He then proceeded to place the bambi bucket in its basket and at the conclusion of his rest period, he took off and set course for the area of the fire to pick up the firefighting squad and return to base.

As he approached the fire area he received a call on the radio from the coordinator asking him to fly over a certain area to see if the fire had reflashed. He proceeded to the indicated area and saw that the fire had indeed reflashed, as there were flames in the area. He reported this to the coordinator, who instructed him to drop water over the area.

He radioed the squad foreman to inform him of his new order and that he would land near them so they could deploy the bambi bucket.

He saw a section of the old EX103 road and, believing it had the necessary characteristics to land, headed directly toward it.

He landed normally and verified that the helicopter was properly supported on the ground. Several minutes later the four members of the squad approached and two of them went inside the helicopter. The pilot informed them that they had to exit and deploy the bambi bucket. Three of them proceeded to take the bucket out of its basket and laid it out in front of the helicopter.

After this two of them moved some distance away from the helicopter and a third stayed alongside the bambi bucket to test its electrically operated release system.

As the pilot stated, he saw the firefighter walk to the front of the helicopter and disappear underneath the nose, possibly to check something in the area where the bambi bucket is latched to the helicopter.

Just then the pilot noticed that the helicopter started to bounce with increasing intensity. Fearing for the firefighter underneath the helicopter, he decided to take off. He pulled on

the collective and the helicopter started to climb, though the jerking motions continued even more intensely.

He tried to regain control of the aircraft but was unable to, losing all control of the helicopter, which ended up turned on its right side.

The pilot, who was uninjured, stopped the engine and cut the fuel and power. He was able to exit the helicopter aided by the members of the squad.

## 2. PROGRESS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The investigation focused mainly on the following areas:

- Cause for the loss of control of the aircraft.
- The pilot's actions.
- The actions of the firefighting squad.
- Bambi bucket operating procedures.

## 3. UPCOMING ACTIONS

The investigation is complete and the final report will be sent out for comments shortly.