

Pilot missing after Queensland helicopter crash

April 8 2016 - 7:48AM Jorge Branco

A passenger injured in a helicopter crash swam 800 metres to shore to raise the alarm, sparking a large-scale search for a missing pilot in far north Queensland.

The Robinson R22 helicopter ditched into waters about 800 metres off the Noah Beach camping area about 7.45pm Thursday night.

Pilot missing after helicopter crash

A passenger swims to shore to raise the alarm after the helicopter he was in ditched one kilometre offshore, north of Port Douglas on Thursday night. *Nine News*

Police said the passenger, a 43-year-old Port Douglas man, borrowed a camper's phone but had to walk to high ground to get reception.

He told police he intended to go back and search for the 50-year-old pilot and helicopter owner after calling the Queensland Ambulance Service but a police spokesman said he did not return to the water.



A pilot is missing after his helicopter crashed into the sea in the state's north. *Photo: Supplied*

Paramedics treated the man for chest, abdominal and leg injuries and took him to Mossman Hospital in a stable condition.

A search featuring water police, five commercial vessels and a helicopter, was suspended at 3.30am due to poor weather and visibility but was due to resume on Friday morning.

Cairns Water Police Senior Constable Carl Bishop said the Perry Irwin police vessel, several commercial vessels and the Port Douglas Coastguard will search from the sea while the Rescue 510 helicopter patrols above.

Police would patrol the shoreline on foot, with four-wheel-drives and quad bikes and State Emergency Service volunteers also assisting.

"They will be searching the immediate coastline area, with the hope of finding the missing person," he said.

Extracted from:

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/pilot-missing-after-queensland-helicopter-crash-20160407-go1a71.html>

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