

Pilot dies in helicopter crash near Carrapateena mine in SA's outback



Photo: A police officer takes a photo of the wreckage of the Eurocopter AS350. (ABC News)

A helicopter pilot has died after crashing near a mine site in South Australia's outback, SA Police has confirmed.

Key points:

- Helicopter crashes near Carrapateena mine in outback South Australia
- SA Police have confirmed the 45-year-old pilot died in the accident
- CASA says it appears the helicopter crashed into a power pole

The accident happened about 10:50am, 3 kilometres from OZ Minerals' Carrapateena copper mine, about 160km north of Port Augusta.

The 45-year-old Queensland pilot was the only person on board, SA Police told the ABC.

The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) said early reports suggested the Eurocopter AS350 crashed into a power pole while it was stringing powerlines.

In a statement, ElectraNet said the pilot was a contractor working for the company.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the pilot's family and colleagues at this time," it said.

"ElectraNet is cooperating with all relevant authorities investigating this incident."

The helicopter was registered to Queensland company Aeropower.

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) is investigating the crash.

"A team of five transport safety investigators from Canberra and Brisbane will travel to the accident site shortly to begin the evidence collection phase," an ATSB spokesperson said.

"The ATSB's safety investigation will include an examination of the wreckage, interviews with witnesses and obtaining any available recorded data for analysis, amongst other activities.

"The evidence collection phase will define the size and scope of the investigation and determine the expected time frame for the completion of a final report."

The spokesperson said it would immediately notify the relevant parties if a "critical safety issue" was identified during the course of the investigation.

Police and SafeWork SA will also investigate.

"Anyone with any further information is asked to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000, or report on line at www.crimestopperssa.com.au," police said.