



**Government of India**  
**Ministry of Civil Aviation**  
**Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau**

**Preliminary Report:** Accident involving M/s Aerotrans Services Pvt Ltd.'s BELL 407 helicopter, bearing registration VT-OXF in Gangnani, District-Uttarkashi, India on 08 May 2025.

## 1. General Information

1.	Helicopter	Type	Bell 407
		Nationality	Indian
		Registration	VT- OXF
2.	Owner and Operator		M/s Aerotrans Services Pvt. Ltd.
3.	Pilot License Type		ATPL(H)
	Extent of Injuries		Fatally injured
4.	No. of Passenger		06
	Extent of Injuries		05 Fatally injured and 01 Seriously injured
6.	Date & Time of Accident		08 <sup>th</sup> May 2025, 08:35 IST (0305 UTC)
7.	Place of Accident		Gangnani, District-Uttarkashi, India
8.	Co-ordinates of Accident Site		Latitude: 30° 54' 47.6" N, Longitude: 78° 40' 52.0" E
9.	Last point of Departure		Kharsali Helipad
10.	Intended landing place		Jhala Helipad
11.	Type of Operation		Non-Schedule operation

## 2. Helicopter Information

The BELL 407 helicopter bearing registration VT-OXF and Serial no. 53829 was manufactured in 2008. The helicopter VT-OXF was owned and operated by M/s Aerotrans Services Private Limited under the DGCA Non-Scheduled Operator permit (AOP NO. #37/2008, valid up to 23.12.2028). The helicopter's Certificate of Registration and Certificate of Airworthiness were valid at the time of accident. The last Airworthiness Review Certificate (ARC) was issued at 4981:24 (FH) hours on 11 Oct 2024 and is valid up to 10 Oct 2025. The helicopter's Maximum All-Up-weight is 2381 Kg. The helicopter is equipped with a Rolls-Royce engine (Model: RR M250 C47B, Serial No. CAE-847584).

The last scheduled inspections were carried out on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2025, and details as follows:

- The Scheduled inspection '300 hours / 12 months' was carried out on the helicopter.
- The Scheduled inspection '150 hours / 12 months' was carried out on the helicopter's engine.

As per the aircraft technical logbook, the last defect reported by the pilot was “Surface skin peeled at the tail rotor tip” on 03<sup>rd</sup> May 2025. The defect was rectified by a Company AME and the defective tail rotor was replaced on 06<sup>th</sup> May 2025. After the rectification, the Certificate to Release to service was issued on 07<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

Till the accident flight, the helicopter had accumulated 5210:07 hrs (TSN) and the engine had accumulated 4445:51 Hrs (TSN).

### 3. Crew information

Crew Details		
Nationality		Indian
Age		59 years
Pilot License	Type	Airline Transport Pilot Licence (Helicopter)
	Date of Issue	17/06/2016
	Valid up to	16/06/2026
	Endorsement as PIC	S365/EC 155, DHRUV, SA 316/315, BELL 407
Class I Medical	Date of Examination	12/12/2024
	Valid up to	26/06/2025
FRTOL License	Date of issue	12/08/2009
	Valid up to	02/11/2031
Total flying experience		6160:42 hours

### 4. Weather Information

On the date of accident, the METAR issued between 0200 UTC and 0300 UTC at Dehradun airport is as given below:

Time (UTC)	Wind	Visibility	Cloud	Temperature/ Dew Point	QNH	Weather	Trend
0200	32003KT	5000 M	FEW030 SCT060	23°C / 23°C	1009	BR	NOSIG
0230	30003KT	5000 M	FEW030 FEW060	25°C / 21°C	1010	HZ	NOSIG
0300	21003KT	5000 M	FEW060	27°C / 18°C	1010	HZ	NOSIG

## 5. Wreckage and Impact Information

The accident took place in a mountainous region. After impacting a roadside overhead fibre cable and then hit the roadside metallic barricades. Subsequently, the helicopter tumbled down the hill. The helicopter finally came to rest against a tree, approximately 250 feet deep into a gorge. The helicopter wreckage was found resting on a surface with a slope of approximately 60°. The helicopter was destroyed in the accident. The coordinates of the accident site are Latitude: 30° 54' 47.6" N, & Longitudes 78° 40' 52.0" E.



## 6. Brief Description of Accident Flight

On 08<sup>th</sup> May 2025, M/s Aero Trans Services Pvt Ltd.'s Bell 407 helicopter bearing registration VT-OXF was planned to operate a hill familiarization check flight followed by Charter flying for Char Dham Yatra. Both flights were planned to be operated by two different pilots.

The planned route for the hill familiarization Check flight was Sahastradhara - Kedarnath - Sahastradhara. The purpose of flight was hill familiarization of a company pilot. The assigned flight level for this sector was 10,500ft AMSL. Prior to departure the preflight inspection was carried out by a company authorized AME, holding a valid DGCA CAT 'A' license. During the pre-flight inspection, no discrepancy was observed by the AME. After the completion of the pre-flight inspection the helicopter was accepted by the Pilot for flying. Subsequently, the helicopter took-off at 05:39 hrs IST from Sahastradhara helipad. It was a dual pilot operation. Two pilots (including the examiner pilot) and three passengers were on board. The helicopter landed back at Sahastradhara helipad at 06:56 hrs IST. The hill familiarization Check flight was uneventful, and no defect was reported by the Pilots.

The next sector on this helicopter was Sahastradhara helipad - Kharsali helipad - Jhala helipad - Phata Lower Jamu helipad. The purpose of the flight was Charter flying for Char Dham Yatra. This was a single pilot operation flight, and this sector was planned to be operated by another pilot. The assigned flight level for this entire sector was 10,500ft AMSL. Prior to departure the preflight inspection was carried out by a company authorized AME, holding a valid DGCA CAT 'A' license. During the pre-flight inspection, no discrepancy was observed by the AME. After the completion of the pre-flight inspection the helicopter was accepted by the Pilot for flying. The helicopter airborne at 07:45 IST from Sahastradhara helipad for Kharsali helipad with six passengers on board.

The helicopter landed at Kharsali helipad and offloaded all onboard passengers and their luggage. Subsequently, a new group of Six passengers boarded the helicopter for Jhala Helipad. The helicopter airborne again at 08:11 IST from Kharsali helipad.

The helicopter flew for 20 minutes before descending from its assigned altitude. Initially, the pilot attempted to land on the Uttarkashi–Gangotri Road (NH 34), near Gangnani in Uttarkashi. During the landing attempt, the helicopter's main rotor blade struck an overhead Fiber cable running parallel to the road. It also damaged some roadside metallic barricades. However, the helicopter was unable to land and tumbled down the hillside. Eventually, it came to rest against a tree, approximately 250 feet deep into a gorge.

The pilot and five passengers were fatally injured in the accident, while one passenger sustained serious injuries. The helicopter was destroyed in the crash. However, there was no fire.

## **7. Progress of the Investigation**

- i The investigation team visited the accident site and carried out onsite investigation. The team also collected perishable and crucial evidence.
- ii During the wreckage examination, the team identified and collected some helicopter's and engine's components (mechanical and electrical) for detailed examination and analysis. The identified helicopter and engine components were brought to the AAIB Headquarters by the investigation team.
- iii The team conducted initial interviews and discussions with representatives of various stakeholders such as first responders (Local Administration), eyewitnesses, the operator, the maintenance organization, ATC and UCADA.
- iv Maintenance and operational records pertaining to VT-OXF were obtained from the operator.
- v The NTSB, USA & the TSB, Canada have appointed Accredited Representative & Technical Advisors for this investigation. The investigation team is coordinating with them for further course of action required to find out the root cause(s).
- vi The technical advisor of M/s Rolls-Royce's travelled to India to assist in engine / powerplant related activities.

- vii The helicopter wreckage has been shifted from the accident site to a secured place for further examination.
- viii Records obtained from various stakeholders are currently being scrutinized.