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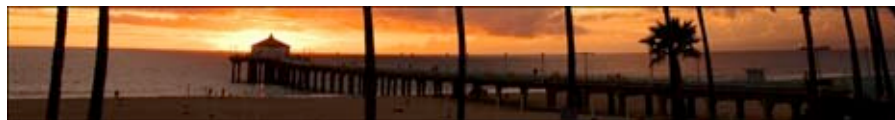
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## Nigeria: Helicopter Crash - NEMA Recovers Bodies of Victims

Clement Nwoji And Anthony Omoh

31 July 2011

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The National Emergency Relief Agency NEMA yesterday said it has recovered the bodies of three victims killed in helicopter crash in Ife-Odan, Osun State on Friday.

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The identities of the victims which were not given as at press time included a male pilot and two females.

NEMA said this just as the Aviation Minister, Princess Stella Adaeze Oduah, and the Accident Investigation Bureau (AIB) yesterday said they have commenced investigations into the crash involving OAS Helicopters to prevent future occurrence.

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According to NEMA's Director-General, Sani Sidi, in a statement made available to Sunday Champion yesterday in Lagos, the crashed helicopter wreckage was discovered "about 10 kilometres West of Ife-Odan on a mountain range". The statement signed by the NEMA's spokesman, Yushau Shuaib, quoted Sidi as saying that the agency

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would work with other agencies to determine what happened to Emergency Locator Beacon (ELB), which could have sent distress signal Mission Control Centre (MCC).

"NEMA always commands all aircraft to have EL Beacon. The incident occurred on a high hill top over 100 feet above sea level. It was on Lagos-Ilorin route", NEMA further said in the statement.

Also yesterday, the Accident Investigation Bureau (AIB) said it has commenced investigations into the crash and had taken the remains of the occupants of the crash to the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) Teaching Hospital, Osogbo in Osun State.

The investigative body, which spoke through its Head, Public Affairs, Mr. Tunji Oketunbi, said the Eccurriel 350 helicopter crashed on Friday, July 28, 2011 into Oke Oba Hill in Ikonifin, between Ife Odan and Ogbomosho.

Oketunbi said: "The aircraft departed airline's helipad in Maryland, Lagos a 9.25am with three passengers on board including two female passengers and a male pilot. All occupants were fatally injured. Investigators from the AIB arrived at the site this morning (29th July 2011) and have commenced investigations."

The Bureau said it would soon make its findings of the accident known to the public.

Meanwhile, Minister of Aviation, Princess Stella Adaeze Oduah, has expressed deep sadness over the death of the three passengers of the OAS helicopter with Reg. No 5N-BKA.

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Princess Oduah, in her condolence message sent to the families of the deceased, prayed the Almighty God to give them the strength and resolve to bear the irreparable loss.

The news of the crash came as a rude shock to the Minister who, since assumption of office barely one month ago, has been working hard to ensure safety in the country's airspace.

She said an investigation into the crash has begun in order to establish the cause of the mishap in order to prevent recurrence.

The Minister assured that all that needs to be done in order to ensure air safety in Nigeria will be done, and has indeed started and expressed deep sadness and regret over this unfortunate incident.

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Wed Aug 3 18:51:22 2011

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