

DMPLS Hot Issue Brief TRACKING SYSTEM

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Subject: SUSPENSION OF ARMY BLACK HAWK OPERATIONS
Comment:
Action Area CA

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HOT ISSUE BRIEF CA 03/2012

ISSUE: Suspension of Army Black Hawk Operations

SENSITIVITY: The media is not aware of this incident.

KEY ISSUES:

- On 19 January 2012, the Chief of Army suspended Black Hawk operations due to concerns over a batch of bolts that may affect the airworthiness of the aircraft.
- During a routine maintenance check a bolt fractured.
- This fracture failure has currently only been found in one bolt, which is identified as part of a manufacturer's batch.
- Whilst the information suggests the issue is most likely limited to a single batch, there remains a possibility that it may not be the case.
- DSTO and DMO are conducting an investigation into the extent of the problem.
- Army is taking a proactive safety response in suspending Black Hawk operations until the outcome of the investigation is known.
- An exemption to the suspension is for flights in case of an emergency due to aero medical evacuation. If this is required Army will adopt risk managed strategies to ensure safety of personnel.

- A detailed assessment of the impact on Army's capability will be known once the extent of the problem has been confirmed.

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TALKING POINTS: Suspension of Army Black Hawk Operations

Army has temporarily suspended flying operations for Black Hawk helicopters upon identifying a fractured bolt during a routine maintenance check.

A fractured bolt may affect the airworthiness of the aircraft. Army has enforced the precautionary suspension to ensure safety as per the Army Operational Airworthiness procedures.

Defence is investigating the cause of the fractured bolt, and is assessing whether other bolts are affected.

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