

29 May 2002

Immediate Use

## TASMANIAN HELICOPTER CRASH: FOUR RESCUED

Four people were rescued early this morning after their helicopter crashed in the Tasmanian Highlands yesterday afternoon.

The four were located after activating a distress beacon late yesterday.

The Rotor Lift search and rescue helicopter was able to home in on the beacon signal to locate the crash site about 35 nautical miles south west of Launceston.

The site was located at about 7.30 pm (AEST) but poor weather prevented the helicopter gaining access to the area.

An airlift of the injured people was able to begin at about 1am (AEST) after the weather improved and a Tasmanian Police search and rescue party arrived at the site. The airlift was completed by about 4am (AEST).

A spokesman for Australian Search and Rescue said the operation again proved the effectiveness and importance of distress beacons.

"Without the distress beacon the crash site would not have been located so quickly," the spokesman said.

Further information: Ben Mitchell 0418 164 901

