



Aviation Investigation Factual Report

Location:	Becker, Minnesota	Accident Number:	CEN22LA318
Date & Time:	July 6, 2022, 10:15 Local	Registration:	N64272
Aircraft:	Hiller UH12E	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Sys/Comp malf/fail (non-power)	Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Factual Information

On July 6, 2022, about 1015 central daylight time, a Hiller UH-12E helicopter, N64272, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Becker, Minnesota. The pilot was seriously injured. The helicopter was operated under the provisions of Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 137 as an aerial application flight.

According to information collected by a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector, the pilot was applying product to a potato field when he felt a small jolt and the helicopter collided with terrain. The operator transported the helicopter back to their facility about a week before they notified the NTSB or FAA of the accident, so neither agency was able to perform on-scene documentation. The operator reported that the main rotor mast had failed; the yellow blade was found about 500 ft west of the main wreckage and the blue blade was found about 300 ft east of the main wreckage. The mast, with a part of the transmission, was found about 150 ft northeast of the blue blade.

An FAA review of maintenance records found that the main rotor hub (p/n 51437-23) was installed on the helicopter on December 14, 2018. Four days before the accident, a mechanic performed a 100-hour inspection, which included compliance with Airworthiness Directive (AD) 73-20-03. This AD requires dye penetrant inspection of the main rotor hub at 50-hour intervals to detect cracks. The helicopter had accumulated 9 flight hours since the inspection.

Attempts to retrieve the parts from the operator were unsuccessful; when the NTSB reestablished contact with the owner, he had already disposed of the parts.

The NTSB Materials Laboratory reviewed photos of the broken rotor hub. The photos showed evidence of several preexisting, progressive fatigue failures.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	54, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Single
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	April 1, 2022
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 5957.8 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Hiller	Registration:	N64272
Model/Series:	UH12E	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	1965	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	1679
Landing Gear Type:	High skid	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	July 2, 2022 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2750 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	9.6 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	10285.9 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	VO-540-C2A
Registered Owner:	DECHENE CORP	Rated Power:	340 Horsepower
Operator:	Triple H Aviation	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Agricultural aircraft (137)
Operator Does Business As:	Triple H Aviation	Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KMGG,1028 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	11 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	10:07 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	207°
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 600 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	50°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.06 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	19°C / 15°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Becker, MN	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Becker, MN	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	45.394738,-93.872706(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Aguilera, Jason
Additional Participating Persons:	Greg Thurston; FAA FSDO; Minneapolis, MN
Report Date:	
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=105500

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).