



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Tillamook, Oregon	Accident Number:	WPR21LA338
Date & Time:	September 8, 2021, 11:00 Local	Registration:	N6516K
Aircraft:	Bell 206L-3	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

The helicopter pilot reported that he was on a low reconnaissance over a field in a canyon intended for agricultural application. During a climb out that was on a heading facing the sun, he lost sight of a previously identified powerline, and attempted to avoid it by referencing the two supporting powerline poles. As the helicopter flew closer, he located the wires and believed that the helicopter's trajectory would clear the obstacle; however, the helicopter struck the powerline, the pilot lost control, and the helicopter descended and impacted terrain. The helicopter sustained substantial damage to the fuselage and main rotor system. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical malfunctions or failures with the helicopter that would have precluded normal operation.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot's failure to maintain clearance from a powerline during a low reconnaissance, with sun glare.

Findings

Aircraft	Altitude - Not attained/maintained
Personnel issues	Monitoring environment - Pilot
Personnel issues	Decision making/judgment - Pilot
Environmental issues	Wire - Effect on equipment
Environmental issues	Glare - Effect on operation

Factual Information

History of Flight

Maneuvering-low-alt flying	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT) (Defining event)
Maneuvering-low-alt flying	Low altitude operation/event

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	40, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	Helicopter; Instrument airplane	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	December 19, 2020
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	October 4, 2020
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 3349 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1088 hours (Total, this make and model), 3261 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 215 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 68 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Bell	Registration:	N6516K
Model/Series:	206L-3	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	1990	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal; Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	51391
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	7
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 30, 2021 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	4150 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	18581.5 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	ALLISON
ELT:	C126 installed, activated	Engine Model/Series:	250-C30P
Registered Owner:	WILBUR-ELLIS COMPANY LLC	Rated Power:	650 Horsepower
Operator:	WILBUR-ELLIS COMPANY LLC	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Rotorcraft external load (133), Agricultural aircraft (137)

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KTMK, 37 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	8 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	10:35 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	293°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility:	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.05 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	20°C / 13°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Tillamook, OR	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Tillamook, OR	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	10:35 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	45.36571,-123.64671(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Salazar, Fabian
Additional Participating Persons:	Douglas Mcgillivray; FAA; Portland, OR
Original Publish Date:	October 20, 2021
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=103825

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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](#).