

ERA13LA314
Changes to Brief of Accident
February 23, 2015

BRIEF NARRATIVE

Postaccident examinations of the airframe, flight controls, main and tail rotor drive system components, engine, and engine accessories revealed no evidence of preimpact failure or malfunction. Although the pilot and passenger descriptions of the direction of the spin were inconsistent, the lack of any mechanical issue with the helicopter or its engine, the pilot's comment that the engine readings were normal at the start of the turn, and the helicopter's flight condition when the loss of control occurred (operating out of ground effect and turning right at a low airspeed) were consistent with a loss of tail rotor effectiveness during the right turn, resulting in a right (clockwise) spin. ~~Therefore, the helicopter likely entered a right spin during the right turn due to the loss of tail rotor effectiveness.~~

PROBABLE CAUSE

The pilot's failure to maintain directional yaw control while maneuvering operating out of ground effect at a low airspeed, which resulted in the loss of tail rotor effectiveness, an uncontrolled descent, and an in-flight collision with trees and terrain. Contributing to the accident was the pilot's ~~intentional operation at an altitude too low to allow for recovery~~ failure to recognize that the low-altitude maneuvering during the aerial observation flight could lead to a loss of tail rotor effectiveness.