



# *Point of View Helicopter Services*

42 Stevens Rd., Bowdoinham, ME 04008 \* 207-666-3372 \* [info@povheli.com](mailto:info@povheli.com)

## Petition for Modification of Probable Cause Report

9/3/14

Ref. N888ZW

Probable Cause Report - ERA13LA314 - File 32813

Date of Accident: 7/03/13

Acting Chairman Christopher Hart  
NTSB, 490 L'Enfant Plaza, SW  
Washington, DC 20594

Chairman Hart,

Per 49CFR§845.41 please consider this Petition for Modification of Probable Cause Report (published 8/7/14) for N888ZW, ERA13LA314. I consider the Board's finding in error because the conclusion is not supported by the Factual Report or what actually occurred. In fact the conclusion appears to be inadvertently backwards, or the reverse of what occurred. As the Factual Report notes (emphasis mine):

He reported that perhaps 2 seconds from initiation of the right turn (with the helicopter approximately 30-40 feet above the trees), the turn escalated in the same direction into a spin (despite left pedal) about the main rotor axis consistent with sudden loss of tail rotor authority. As the out of control spin began and helicopter descended, his passenger asked "what's going on?" to which he replied "I don't know" before pulling up on the collective to ease their imminent contact with the trees (approximately 40 feet in height). Because the flight was so low he could not lower collective (increasing his rate of descent), apply forward cyclic and accelerate out of any possible disturbed air. He does not know how many turns were completed but the helicopter was in the trees within about 2 seconds of the time from spin initiation, or the time it took for his passenger to ask her question and for his response.

In other words, normal flight and directional control were in fact maintained until loss of tail rotor authority occurred at which time loss of yaw control did occur while pitch control was maintained as we entered the trees in a level attitude.

The Probable Cause Report although stating this order of events correctly in the last paragraph of the report body (emphasis mine)

...Therefore, the helicopter likely entered a right spin during the right turn due to the loss of tail rotor effectiveness.

reverses this in the conclusion, inaccurately stating I lost control of the aircraft first, resulting in LTE when in fact it was loss of tail rotor authority that caused loss of directional control. Conclusion language as printed is basically reversed from the sequence

described in the Factual Report and in Probable Cause Report body (emphasis below mine).

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

The pilot's failure to maintain directional control while maneuvering, which resulted in the loss of tail rotor effectiveness, an uncontrolled descent, and an in-flight collision with tress(sic) and terrain. Contributing to the accident was the pilot's intentional operation at an altitude too low to allow for recovery.

Below, I have re-written the report conclusion to more accurately describe the accident cause.

N888ZW suffered a sudden loss of tail rotor authority causing a rapid spin in a clockwise direction. The sudden spin resulted in the pilot's inability to maintain directional control while slowly descending into the trees with subsequent ground impact. While there was no apparent evidence of mechanical failure, neither did flight conditions appear to be those classically preceding loss of tail rotor effectiveness (LTE) except a right turn. Contributing to the accident was the pilot's intentional operation at an altitude too low to allow for recovery.

Please reconsider your report conclusion language in light of the evidence presented and reissue the report conclusion to accurately reflect the Factual Report and what actually occurred.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Ed Friedman.

Ed Friedman  
Point of View Helicopter Services