



Aviation Investigation Factual Report

Location:	Sarasota, Florida	Accident Number:	ERA23LA044
Date & Time:	October 27, 2022, 15:00 Local	Registration:	N442H
Aircraft:	Robinson R44	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Birdstrike	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Factual Information

On October 27, 2022, about 1500 eastern daylight time, a Robinson R44, N442H, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Sarasota, Florida. The flight instructor and passenger were seriously injured. The helicopter was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

According to the pilot, while en route, he saw birds in his flight path, he banked to the right to avoid striking one, and then he felt a vibration in the helicopter. He moved the collective up and down in an attempt to stop the vibration; however, it continued. The pilot performed a precautionary landing to a marshy area, and the helicopter subsequently rolled over, resulting in substantial damage to the fuselage.

Examination of the helicopter by a Federal Aviation Administration inspector revealed that the tail rotor exhibited a dent. The inspector and a mechanic examined the helicopter for any anomalies and noted that there were no mechanical malfunctions that would have precluded normal operation.

The dent was examined for evidence of a bird strike; however, the dented side of the tail rotor landed in the marsh water and remained there until it was recovered, and no evidence of organic material was noted.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	64, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	January 4, 2022
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	December 2, 2021
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Robinson	Registration:	N442H
Model/Series:	R44	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	2018	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	14185
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 1, 2022 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	66 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	626 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	205 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	SRQ, 17 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	21 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	19:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	306°
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility:	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 9500 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	11 knots / None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	200°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	29.91 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	27°C / 22°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Winter Haven, FL (GIF)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Englewood, FL (X36)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:20 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	27.1978,-82.2451(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Kemner, Heidi
Additional Participating Persons:	Kevin David; FAA/FSDO; Tampa, FL
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=106218

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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](#).