



Aviation Investigation Factual Report

Location:	Lewiston, Idaho	Accident Number:	WPR24LA138
Date & Time:	May 2, 2024, 12:30 Local	Registration:	N42PL
Aircraft:	Aerospatiale SA315B	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Low altitude operation/event	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	32, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	Unknown
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Helicopter	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	December 28, 2023
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	March 21, 2024
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 1993 hours (Total, all aircraft), 512 hours (Total, this make and model), 1847 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 70 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Aerospatiale	Registration:	N42PL
Model/Series:	SA315B	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	1976	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	2438
Landing Gear Type:	None; Skid	Seats:	5
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 8, 2024 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	5070 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	21.3 Hrs	Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	10601.8 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	TURBOMECA
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	ARTOUSTE IIIB1
Registered Owner:	ESSENTIAL FLIGHT OPERATIONS LLC	Rated Power:	590 Horsepower
Operator:	ESSENTIAL FLIGHT OPERATIONS LLC	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Agricultural aircraft (137)

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	LWS,1436 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	6 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	11:00 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	46°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/ None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	15.6°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	COTTONWOOD, ID (S84)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	LEWISTON, ID (LWS)	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:	09:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	46.408,-116.90316(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Hicks, Michael
Additional Participating Persons:	Doug Belcher; FAA; Spokane , WA
Report Date:	
Last Revision Date:	December 17, 2025
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=194210

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](#).