



Aviation Investigation Factual Report

Location:	Cisco, Georgia	Accident Number:	ERA24LA267
Date & Time:	June 18, 2024, 13:30 Local	Registration:	N72BM
Aircraft:	GARLICK HELICOPTERS INC OH-58A+	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Unknown or undetermined	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Factual Information

On June 18, 2024, about 1330 eastern daylight time, a Garlick Helicopters Inc, OH-58A+, N72BM, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Cisco, Georgia. The pilot sustained minor injuries. The helicopter was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 137 aerial application flight.

According to the pilot, he departed from Greensboro, Georgia, at 1043 to spray a field in Cisco, Georgia. After the 1.15-hour flight to the field, he landed, shut down the engine, and spoke to the landowner about what was to be sprayed and what was to be avoided. The pilot topped off the helicopter with fuel from a fuel truck. The landowner then flew around the field with the pilot so he could point out the different areas of concern. After the observation flight, the pilot loaded 40 gallons of chemicals and sprayed the first part of the field, which took about 8 minutes. The pilot returned and loaded another 50 gallons of chemicals while the engine remained operating. The pilot returned to the field and sprayed all 50 gallons.

The pilot again loaded the helicopter with 50 more gallons of chemicals. During the subsequent liftoff, the helicopter felt "heavy," but all the engine instruments were in their normal operating ranges, so he continued the flight. During the first teardrop turn back to the field to spray, the engine rpm dropped, and the pilot saw that the red "engine out" light was illuminated. The pilot immediately looked for a place to land and tried to land between two trees. The helicopter contacted the trees and rolled over, which substantially damaged the tail rotor assembly and main rotor blades.

The helicopter displayed damage consistent with near-vertical impact, resulting in extensive damage to the front right side of the cockpit and aft lower fuselage areas, as well as the under fuselage-mounted chemical hopper. The tail boom was fractured aft of the fuselage attachment. The rotor head remained attached to the mast. The skids remained attached to the fuselage and were partially fractured and splayed outward on the right side. The main rotor blades remained attached to the rotor head but were fractured at different points along the length of the blades. The tail rotor assembly and portions of the blades remained attached to the tail rotor gearbox and tail boom mounts. The fuel cap remained in place at the fuel filler port. The fuel bladder was not punctured and an unquantified amount of fuel was observed in the tank such that the fuel boost pump was fully submerged.

The drive shaft assembly had fractured at the flex-straps connecting the drive shaft to the main rotor transmission. The drive shaft assembly also disconnected at the engine side bolted connection to the freewheeling unit. Heavy rotational scoring was noted at several external locations along the length of the drive shaft. Rotational scoring and extensive gouging was noted on the main rotor transmission strike plate located immediately below the drive shaft

flange connection to the transmission. The freewheeling unit was tested for proper functionality by checking its interactive rotation with the power turbine N2 rotor. The freewheel unit assembly and internal sprag-clutch bearing performed as expected. The output shaft assembly was disengaged and removed from the engine gearbox. All components appeared unremarkable and did not exhibit any anomalous damage.

The engine was removed and sent to the manufacturer for further examination. Visual examination of the engine revealed that the compressor front support and 1st stage blades sustained heavy impact damage during the accident sequence. The 4th stage power turbine blades appeared undamaged and void of thermal distress, as did the surrounding turbine sections and exhaust plenum.

The engine was placed in a test cell and successfully started, but was unable to achieve more than 115 ft-lbs of torque before the engine began to surge due to the damaged compressor blades. The compressor module was replaced with a serviceable module and the engine was started again. The engine successfully completed ground idle, flight-idle, max-continuous-power, and takeoff power runs.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	33, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	June 5, 2024
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	March 4, 2023
Flight Time:	1415 hours (Total, all aircraft), 75 hours (Total, this make and model), 1334 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 31 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	GARLICK HELICOPTERS INC	Registration:	N72BM
Model/Series:	OH-58A+ NO SERIES	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	1972	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	72-21248
Landing Gear Type:	High skid	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 9, 2024 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3200 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	9118 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Rolls Royce
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	T63-A-720
Registered Owner:	VERTICAL VEGETATION MANAGEMENT LLC	Rated Power:	420
Operator:	VERTICAL VEGETATION MANAGEMENT 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:	DNN,710 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	13 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	13:35 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	211°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 7000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 31000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots / None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	130°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.17 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	30°C / 19°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Cisco, GA	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Cisco, GA	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	34.910667,-84.73175

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Boggs, Daniel
Additional Participating Persons:	Mike Jones; FAA/FSDO; College Park, GA Jack Johnson; Rolls Royce; Indianapolis, IN
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=194502

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](#).