



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Deer Valley, Arizona	Accident Number:	WPR22LA154
Date & Time:	April 16, 2022, 22:26 Local	Registration:	N808LF
Aircraft:	Eurocopter AS 350 B3	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Aircraft servicing event	Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air taxi & commuter - Non-scheduled		

Analysis

The pilot of the helicopter reported that, he was on the ramp with the engine running to accomplish a rapid refuel. The fueler was attempting to attach the grounding cable to the helicopter and due to the cable not locking, he maneuvered the cable up and down, which then contacted the main rotor blades. The pilot reported he felt a “violent jolt” and immediately shut the engine down. The fueler’s hands were seriously injured. The main rotor blades were substantially damaged. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions with the helicopter that would have precluded normal operation.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The fuelers improper action during the refueling process.

Findings

Personnel issues	Use of equip/system - Ground crew
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Factual Information

History of Flight

Prior to flight	Aircraft servicing event (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	33, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Helicopter	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	August 13, 2021
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	7172.4 hours (Total, all aircraft), 445.1 hours (Total, this make and model), 7114 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 31.1 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 10.8 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 0 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Eurocopter	Registration:	N808LF
Model/Series:	AS 350 B3	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	2010	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	4983
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	5
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 14, 2022 Continuous airworthiness	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	5225 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	14 Hrs	Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	3931 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Turbomeca
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	Arriel 2B1
Registered Owner:	AIR METHODS CORP	Rated Power:	747 Horsepower
Operator:	AIR METHODS CORP	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	On-demand air taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:	Medical Evacuation Air Taxi	Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Night
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KDVT METAR,1478 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	04:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	240°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.94 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	23°C / 0°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Deer Valley, AZ	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Deer Valley, AZ	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class D

Airport Information

Airport:	Deer Valley DVT	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	1478 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	33.411331,-112.04447

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Bledsoe, James
Additional Participating Persons:	Daniel Griedein; FAA FSDO; Scottsdale, AZ
Original Publish Date:	October 6, 2022
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=104956

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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](#).