



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Folsom, New Mexico	Accident Number:	WPR22LA168
Date & Time:	April 28, 2022, 15:30 Local	Registration:	N41339
Aircraft:	ROBINSON HELICOPTER COMPANY R44 II	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

The pilot reported that after departing from a loading truck for the aerial application flight, he turned into the wind, then initiated a right downwind turn. The helicopter lost airspeed and rotor rpm so the pilot lowered collective and the helicopter settled to the ground resulting in a hard landing. The tailboom and main rotor were substantially damaged. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical malfunctions or failures 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 pilot’s failure to maintain airspeed and rotor rpm which resulted in a hard landing.

Findings

Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Aircraft	Airspeed - Not attained/maintained

Factual Information

History of Flight

Maneuvering-low-alt flying	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	50, 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; Instrument helicopter	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	November 16, 2021
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	February 21, 2022
Flight Time:	4673 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1500 hours (Total, this make and model), 40 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	ROBINSON HELICOPTER COMPANY	Registration:	N41339
Model/Series:	R44 II	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	2008	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	12365
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	November 15, 2021 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2550 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	834 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540 AEIA5
Registered Owner:	HELI AG LLC (Ray Griffith)	Rated Power:	305
Operator:	HELI AG LLC (Ray Griffith)	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:	KRTN,6352 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	45 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:00 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	71°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/ 18 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/ None
Wind Direction:	240°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/ N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.1 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	26.7°C / -12°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Folsom, NM	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Folsom, NM	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	None N/A	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	6352 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Vegetation
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Valley/terrain following

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	36.91092,-103.64784

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Bledsoe, James
Additional Participating Persons:	Geary S. Monckton; FAA; NM
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=105019

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](#).