



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	KALAMAZOO, Michigan	Accident Number:	CHI86LA044
Date & Time:	December 7, 1985, 12:00 Local	Registration:	N7763
Aircraft:	BELL 47G	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation		

Analysis

UPON THE APPROACH TO HOVER FOR LANDING ON A SNOW COVERED AIRSTRIP, DRY SNOW BLEW UP AND OBSCURED THE PILOT'S VISUAL REFERENCES. ONE SKID TOUCHED DOWN AS THE HELICOPTER WAS MOVING Laterally CAUSING THE AIRCRAFT TO ROLL OVER ON ITS SIDE.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: HOVER

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - WHITEOUT
2. (C) UNSUITABLE TERRAIN OR TAKEOFF/LANDING/TAXI AREA - SELECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - SNOW COVERED
4. (C) DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: HOVER

Occurrence #3: ROLL OVER
Phase of Operation: HOVER

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	42, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Helicopter	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	September 30, 1985
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	7956 hours (Total, all aircraft), 5084 hours (Total, this make and model), 7500 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 71 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BELL	Registration:	N7763
Model/Series:	47G 47G	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	K992
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 4, 1985 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2850 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	38 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1338 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	V0435
Registered Owner:	DOUGLAS A. KITZMILLER	Rated Power:	260 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Unknown	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	2 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 800 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	180°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	-1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Smoke		
Departure Point:	MATTAWAN , MI (RLA)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	KALAMAZOO , MI (RLA)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	11:45 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	NEWMAN'S RLA	Runway Surface Type:	Snow
Airport Elevation:	839 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Snow
Runway Used:	18	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2700 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Straight-in

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	42.349395,-85.560325(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Benzon, Robert
Additional Participating Persons:	C PINE; GRAND RAPIDS , MI
Original Publish Date:	
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=13390

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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](#).