



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	ELLENDALE, Minnesota	Accident Number:	CHI86MA071
Date & Time:	January 21, 1986, 04:25 Local	Registration:	N1498W
Aircraft:	BELL 206B	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air taxi & commuter - Non-scheduled		

Analysis

THE PURPOSE OF THE FLT WAS TO TAKE A NEWS CREW TO A LOCATION TO COVER A STORY. THE NEWS CREW HAD ATTEMPTED TO HIRE ANOTHER HELICOPTER, BUT THAT OPERATOR REFUSED DUE TO FORCAST LOW VISIBILITY. THIS PLT, HOWEVER, AGREED TO FLY. ALTHO HE WAS CERTIFIED FOR INSTRUMENT FLT IN AIRPLANES, THE PLT WAS NOT QUALIFIED FOR INSTRUMENT FLT IN HELICOPTERS, NOR WAS THE HELICOPTER CERTIFIED FOR INSTRUMENT FLT. DURING A WX BRIEFING, THE PLT WAS ADVISED OF ADVERSE WX COND. WHILE N1498W WAS IN FLT, 2 WITNESSES OBSD A HELICOPTER FLYING ALONG A HIWAY ON THE PLT'S PLANNED ROUTE AT A VERY LOW ALT. A TRUCK DRIVER ESTIMATED THE ACFT HAD PASSED APRX 2' OVR HIS 13' RIG; HE SAID HE COULD FEEL THE DOWNWASH FM THE ROTOR BLADES. WITNESSES ESTIMATED THE CEILING TO BE AT OR BELOW 100' AGL & THE VISIBILITY TO BE 1/8 TO 1/4 MI WITH HVY FOG. THE HELICOPTER CRASHED & BURNED APRX 100' FM THE HIWAY NEAR A PWR LINE CROSSING. IMPACT OCCURRED WHILE THE HELICOPTER WAS IN A SHALLOW DSCNT, HDG AWAY FM THE HIWAY & PARALLEL WITH THE PWR LINE. WRECKAGE WAS NOT FND UNTIL 1150 CST. NO ELT WAS INSTALLED.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER

Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (F) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - INITIATED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) OVERCONFIDENCE IN PERSONAL ABILITY - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
4. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
5. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
6. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. (F) LACK OF TOTAL INSTRUMENT TIME - PILOT IN COMMAND
8. (F) OVERCONFIDENCE IN AIRCRAFT'S ABILITY - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO REVERSE DIRECTION

Findings

9. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH OBSTRUCTION(S)
10. MANEUVER - PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND
11. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND
12. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport	Age:	35, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	August 19, 1985
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2071 hours (Total, all aircraft), 141 hours (Total, this make and model), 835 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BELL	Registration:	N1498W
Model/Series:	206B 206B	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	425
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	5
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 20, 1986 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3200 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	1 Hrs	Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	11760 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	ALLISON
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	250-C20
Registered Owner:	ODYSSEY HELICOPTER SERVICE INC	Rated Power:	317 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	On-demand air taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument (IMC)	Condition of Light:	Night/dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 100 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/ None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Fog		
Departure Point:	MINNEAPOLIS (RLA)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	AUSTIN (RLA)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	03:15 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	0 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	0 ft / 0 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	2 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	43.869552,-93.300689(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Benzon, Robert

Additional Participating Persons:

R.	M GLAUB; MINNEAPOLIS , MN
L.	E FREIHEIT; MINNEAPOLIS , MN
D.	M TITLOW; INDIANAPOLIS , IN
J.	H SUTTLE; FT. WORTH , TX

Original Publish Date:

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=13537>

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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](#).