



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Laurie, Missouri	Accident Number:	CHI91FA294
Date & Time:	September 15, 1991, 18:45 Local	Registration:	N7768
Aircraft:	Bell-K Copter 47D1	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT WAS OBSERVED TO BE CONSUMING BEER WITH A GROUP OF PEOPLE BEFORE THE FLIGHT. HE AND 2 OTHERS OF THE GROUP WERE SEEN TO GO THE HELICOPTER, BOARD IT AND TAKE OFF. A WITNESS ON A HIGHWAY ABOUT 5 1/2 MILES SOUTH OF THE DEPARTURE POINT OBSERVED A HELICOPTER FLYING NEAR TREETOP LEVEL TOWARD HER CAR. SHE SAID THE HELICOPTER THEN TURNED TOWARD A LAKE AND DISAPPEARED FROM HER SIGHT. TWO WITNESSES OBSERVED THE HELICOPTER STRIKE POWERLINE CABLES, THEN CRASH INTO THE LAKE. THE WIRES WERE ESTIMATE TO BE ABOUT 60 TO 75 FT ABOVE THE WATER. TOXICOLOGY TESTS FOR ALCOHOL REVEALED THE PILOT AND 1 PASSENGER HAD BLOOD/ALCOHOL LEVELS OF 0.161% AND 0.190%, RESPECTIVELY. THEIR URINE HAD ALCOHOL LEVELS OF 0.155 AND 0.221%. THE OTHER PASSENGER HAD A URINE/ALCOHOL LEVEL OF 0.204%.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: POOR JUDGEMENT OF THE PILOT, DUE TO IMPAIRMENT FROM CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE BEFORE FLIGHT, HIS INTENTIONAL BUZZING, AND HIS INADEQUATE VISUAL LOOKOUT (FAILURE TO SEE-AND-AVOID POWER LINES).

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. (C) JUDGMENT - POOR - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) IMPAIRMENT(ALCOHOL) - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) BUZZING - INTENTIONAL - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. OBJECT - WIRE,TRANSMISSION
5. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

6. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	37, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 3, 1990
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1753 hours (Total, all aircraft), 979 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Bell-K Copter	Registration:	N7768
Model/Series:	47D1 47D1	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	K9124
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2350 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	0 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	FRANKLIN
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	6V-335-A
Registered Owner:	PETER G. EELES	Rated Power:	210 Horsepower
Operator:	PETER G. EELES	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Dusk
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	3 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	180°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	32°C / -18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	LAURIE , MO	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	18:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

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

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	2 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Gattolin, Frank
Additional Participating Persons:	RICHARD J CODDINGTON; KANSAS CITY , MO ROBERT ARNSPERGER; KANSAS CITY , MO DAVID C DOSKER; FT. WORTH , TX
Original Publish Date:	August 13, 1993
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=14919

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](#).