



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	WRANGELL, Alaska	<b>Accident Number:</b>	DEN90FA053
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	February 7, 1990, 15:13 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	CGNMJ
<b>Aircraft:</b>	BELL 205A-1	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	6 Fatal, 2 Serious
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation		

## Analysis

THE HELICOPTER, C-GNMJ, CRASHED ON A FRZN RIVER AS MINERS WERE BEING TRANSPORTED FROM THE JOHNNY MOUNTAIN GOLD MINE (NEAR THE U.S./CANADIAN BORDER) TO WRANGELL, AK. THE PLT COULD NOT RECALL THE ACCIDENT & THE SURVIVING PASSENGER (PAX) REFUSED TO BE INTERVIEWED. ANOTHER HELICOPTER WAS EN ROUTE FROM WRANGELL TO THE MINE SITE AT THE SAME TIME. THE PLT OF THE OTHER HELICOPTER MADE 2 ATTEMPTS TO PENETRATE THE BACK SIDE OF THE SNOW SQUALL & FAILED. AFTER REVERSING COURSE TO RTRN TO WRANGELL, THAT PLT SIGHTED THE WRECKAGE OF C-GNMJ. PASSENGERS WHO HAD FLOWN TO WRANGELL ABOARD C-GNMJ ON A PREVIOUS TRIP SAID THEY HAD ENCOUNTERED SNOW SQUALLS & WHITEOUT CONDITIONS. AT ONE POINT, ONE OF THE PAX BELIEVED THE HELICOPTER WAS IN A HOVER. HE SAID IT THEN CAME OUT OF THE SQUALL IN A STEEP BANK. A FORMER EMPLOYEE RPRTD THAT COMPANY OFFICIALS PRESSURED THE PLTS TO COMPLETE THEIR FLTS, IN SPITE OF MARGINAL WX CONDITIONS.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S CONTINUED VFR FLIGHT INTO INSTRUMENT METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS (IMC), AND HIS FAILURE TO MAINTAIN CONTROL OF THE AIRCRAFT DUE TO SPATIAL DISORIENTATION. FACTORS RELATED TO THE ACCIDENT WERE: COMPANY INDUCED PRESSURE TO MAKE THE FLIGHT, THE PILOT'S DECISION TO INITIATE FLIGHT INTO KNOWN ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS, HIS LACK OF INSTRUMENT EXPERIENCE, HIS OVERCONFIDENCE IN HIS PERSONAL ABILITIES, AND THE ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER

Phase of Operation: CRUISE

### Findings

1. (F) FLIGHT INTO KNOWN ADVERSE WEATHER - INITIATED - PILOT IN COMMAND
  2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
  3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - SNOW
  4. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - OBSCURATION
  5. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - WHITEOUT
  6. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND
  7. (F) OVERCONFIDENCE IN PERSONAL ABILITY - PILOT IN COMMAND
  8. (F) COMPANY-INDUCED PRESSURE - COMPANY/OPERATOR MANAGEMENT
  9. (F) LACK OF TOTAL INSTRUMENT TIME - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

### Findings

10. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
  11. (C) SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

### Findings

12. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER,FROZEN

## Factual Information

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	26, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Right
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 1 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	April 14, 1989
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	Yes	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	4500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1100 hours (Total, this make and model), 120 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 30 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	BELL	<b>Registration:</b>	CGNMJ
<b>Model/Series:</b>	205A-1 205A-1	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Helicopter
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	30264
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	High skid	<b>Seats:</b>	13
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	January 11, 1990 100 hour	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	9500 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	91 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Turbo shaft
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	7160 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	LYCOMING
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	T5313B
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	NORTHERN MOUNTAIN HELIC. INC.	<b>Rated Power:</b>	1250 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	NORTHERN MOUNTAIN HELICOPTERS	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Instrument (IMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>		<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>		<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Unknown	<b>Visibility</b>	
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	100 ft AGL	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	/	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	0°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>		<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	N/A - None - Fog		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	JOHNNY MOUNTAIN (NONE)	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	Company VFR
<b>Destination:</b>	WRANGELL , AK (WRG )	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	15:10 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

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

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal, 1 Serious	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	5 Fatal, 1 Serious	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	6 Fatal, 2 Serious	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	56.409336,-131.610885(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Scott, Arnold
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	ROBERT W KOLVIG; JUNEAU , AK JAMES R ARNOLD; FORT WORTH , TX CHARLES C HERRON; FORT WORTH , TX REGEAN LANTHIER; OTTAWA
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	June 10, 1991
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=17817">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=17817</a>

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