



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Cornland, Illinois	Accident Number:	CEN24LA276
Date & Time:	July 20, 2024, 20:15 Local	Registration:	N26UK
Aircraft:	Bell 206	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Low altitude operation/event	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

The pilot reported that while performing aerial applications, the main rotor mast struck a wire. The helicopter became uncontrollable and it impacted a cornfield. He stated the sun was setting and he did not see the wire. The helicopter sustained substantial damage to the fuselage, tail boom, tail rotor blade, and main rotor blades.

The pilot reported that there were no preimpact mechanical failures or malfunctions 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 was unable to see a wire due to the setting sun and the helicopter subsequently struck the wire.

Findings

Personnel issues	Monitoring environment - Pilot
Environmental issues	Low light - Effect on personnel
Aircraft	Altitude - Not attained/maintained
Environmental issues	Wire - Awareness of condition

Factual Information

History of Flight

Maneuvering-low-alt flying	Low altitude operation/event (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	36, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	June 12, 2024
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	September 20, 2023
Flight Time:	3024 hours (Total, all aircraft), 307 hours (Total, this make and model), 2928 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Bell	Registration:	N26UK
Model/Series:	206 B	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	1975	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	1684
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	5
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3350 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Rolls-Royce
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	250 C20B
Registered Owner:	Orlando Aircraft Sales, LLC	Rated Power:	
Operator:	Heliteam	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Agricultural aircraft (137)

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Dusk
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KSPI,590 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	14 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	19:52 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	247°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.09 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	23°C / 21°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	39.9375,-89.401667(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Abraham, Laura
Additional Participating Persons:	Tim Grigsby; FAA; Springfield, IL
Original Publish Date:	December 2, 2024
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=194736

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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](#).