



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	PEARSALL, Texas	Accident Number:	FTW91LA166
Date & Time:	September 26, 1991, 16:20 Local	Registration:	N59424
Aircraft:	BELL 47G-5A	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Aerial observation		

Analysis

PILOT WAS ON A POWER LINE PATROL FLIGHT AND HAD LANDED IN AN AREA NEAR A ROAD TO REFUEL FROM THE OPERATOR'S TRUCK PRIOR TO THE LAST LEG OF THE DAY. DURING THE INITIAL CLIMB AFTER TAKEOFF, THE SKIDS STRUCK POWER LINES HE HAD NOT OBSERVED DURING THE APPROACH OR TAKEOFF. FOLLOWING THE WIRE STRIKE THE AIRCRAFT NOSED OVER, IMPACTED THE GROUND, AND WAS DESTROYED DURING A POST-CRASH FIRE.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S FAILURE TO MAINTAIN ADEQUATE VISUAL LOOKOUT FOR OBSTACLES DURING OPERATIONS FROM A REMOTE SITE.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

- Findings
1. OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION
 2. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	45, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Helicopter	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 21, 1991
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1119 hours (Total, all aircraft), 50 hours (Total, this make and model), 1057 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BELL	Registration:	N59424
Model/Series:	47G-5A 47G-5A	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	25143
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 23, 1991 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2850 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	78 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5957 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	VO-435-B1A
Registered Owner:	TILLER HELICOPTER SERVICE, INC	Rated Power:	260 Horsepower
Operator:	TILLER HELICOPTER SERVICE, INC	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots / 15 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	335°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	29°C / -18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	ALICE , TX (NONE)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	16:20 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

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 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	2 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	On-ground
Total Injuries:	3 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	28.879762,-99.089515(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Wandel, Warren
Additional Participating Persons:	R. ANDERSON; SAN ANTONIO , TX
Original Publish Date:	March 31, 1993
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=23402

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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](#).