



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	GONZALES, California	Accident Number:	LAX86FVM08
Date & Time:	September 7, 1986, 07:50 Local	Registration:	N149HA
Aircraft:	HILLER UH 12E	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

A LOSS OF POWER WAS EXPERIENCED AS THE ACFT DESCENDED INTO A FIELD AT THE BEGINNING OF AN AERIAL APPLICATION SPRAY RUN. THE PLT INITIATED A FORCED LANDING INTO THE FIELD. DURING THE LANDING THE RIGHT SKID DUG INTO THE FIELD, TIPPING THE HELICOPTER ONTO ITS RIGHT SIDE. AN EXAMINATION OF THE WRECKAGE REVEALED THAT THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF FUEL IN THE ACFTS FUEL TANK. THE ACFT WAS REFUELED WITH 20 GALLONS OF FUEL AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SECOND SPRAY RUN. FUEL EXHAUSTION OCCURRED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SIXTH SPRAY PASS.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - AERIAL APPLICATION

Findings

1. (C) FLUID,FUEL - EXHAUSTION
2. (C) FUEL SUPPLY - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - CROP

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	35, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Center
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	September 8, 1986
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	7483 hours (Total, all aircraft), 7249 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 389 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 14 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	HILLER	Registration:	N149HA
Model/Series:	UH 12E UH 12E	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	HA3049
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3100 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	VO-540-C2A
Registered Owner:	HELICAIR AG. INC.	Rated Power:	305 Horsepower
Operator:		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:	Not reported
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	
Lowest Ceiling:	Unknown	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	GONZALES , CA	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	GONZALES , CA	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	00:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

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

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	36.539459,-121.39093(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Mahl, Walter

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: January 25, 1988

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=24988>

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](#).