



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	FIVE POINTS, California	Accident Number:	LAX95LA132
Date & Time:	March 12, 1995, 14:30 Local	Registration:	N172ET
Aircraft:	HILLER UH-12E	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

WHILE SPRAYING A FIELD, THE HELICOPTER BEGAN TO LOSE ENGINE POWER. THE PILOT STARTED A PRECAUTIONARY LANDING WHEN THE POWER RETURNED. THE PILOT THEN TURNED TO LAND ON A DIRT ROAD, BUT THE ENGINE QUIT. HE STATED THAT HE HAD RUN OUT OF GAS. HE REPORTED NO MECHANICAL PROBLEMS.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: fuel exhaustion due to the pilot's inattention to the fuel supply.

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 - INATTENTIVE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: HARD LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Occurrence #3: ROLL OVER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Factual Information

On March 12, 1995, at 1430 hours Pacific standard time, a Hiller UH-12E helicopter, N172ET, crashed in an open field near Five Points, California, during an aerial application conducted under 14 CFR Part 137. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time. The aircraft was substantially damaged and the pilot was not injured. The flight originated from the Five Points area about 1 hour before the accident occurred.

In the Pilot/Operator Report, the pilot indicated that while spraying the field "the engine started to lose power". As he began to flare, the power came back. At an altitude of 10-15 feet agl, the pilot initiated a turn to the south toward a dirt road to land. At 50 yards from the intended landing site, the engine stopped. He flared to zero out the airspeed, and pulled pitch to cushion the landing. The helicopter landed hard and rolled over which resulted in damage to the main rotor blades, the tail boom, the tail rotor gear box, the spray boom, and the chin bubble.

According to an inspector from the Federal Aviation Administration, the pilot stated that the aircraft ran out of fuel. There were no reported mechanical problems with the helicopter.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Private	Age:	46, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Center
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 11, 1994
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	17000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 4000 hours (Total, this make and model), 15000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 200 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 75 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	HILLER	Registration:	N172ET
Model/Series:	UH-12E UH-12E	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	HA-3072
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 31, 1995 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2750 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	55 Hrs	Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	3652 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	ALLISON
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	250-C20
Registered Owner:	SAN JOAQUIN HELICOPTERS	Rated Power:	400 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	CUFG

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	30 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	135°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	16°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	13:30 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:	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:	36.380134,-120.13063(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Mucho, R.
Additional Participating Persons:	JIM MURRAY; FRESNO , CA
Original Publish Date:	September 24, 1995
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=29052

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](#).