



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	FORT WALTON BCH, Florida	<b>Accident Number:</b>	MIA98LA154
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	May 9, 1998, 15:00 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N6714D
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Bell 47G-2	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	3 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation		

## Analysis

While in cruise flight at 500-600 feet the engine failed. A autorotation was performed and the helicopter touched down in 4-5 feet of water. After touchdown the waves rolled the helicopter to the right and the main rotor contacted the water and stopped. The pilot stated the helicopter contained about 20 gallons of fuel at the time of the accident. Examination of the engine and accessories showed no evidence of mechanical failure or malfunction. All fuel lines were found unobstructed.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The loss of engine power for undetermined reasons.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER  
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings  
1. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED  
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Occurrence #2: DITCHING  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY



## Factual Information

On May 9, 1998, about 1500 central daylight time, a Bell 47G-2, N6714D, registered to Penguin-Air Helicopters, Inc., ditched in the Gulf of Mexico, near Fort Walton Beach, Florida, following loss of engine power, while on a Title 14 CFR Part 91 sightseeing flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time and no flight plan was filed. The helicopter received substantial damage and the commercial-rated pilot and two passengers received minor injuries. The flight originated from Fort Walton Beach, Florida, a few minutes before the accident.

The pilot stated that he had refueled the helicopter and had about 20 gallons of fuel onboard at the time of the accident. He had completed giving three rides. While on the fourth ride, over the Gulf of Mexico near Fort Walton Beach, at an altitude of 500-600 feet, the engine failed. He entered autorotation and touched down in 4-5 feet of water. The waves caused the helicopter to roll over to the right and the main rotor blades contacted the water and stopped. He and the two passengers then exited the helicopter.

Examination of the engine by a mechanic, under the supervision of an FAA inspector, showed the engine assembly rotated and continuity of the crankshaft, valve train, and all accessory drives gears was confirmed. The magneto switch operated normally and each magneto rotated. The magnetos would not fire due to water damage. The carburetor was opened and all ports were found unobstructed. All airframe and engine fuel lines were unobstructed.

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	45, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	June 13, 1997
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	Yes	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	3900 hours (Total, all aircraft), 800 hours (Total, this make and model), 3000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 45 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Bell	<b>Registration:</b>	N6714D
<b>Model/Series:</b>	47G-2 47G-2	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Helicopter
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	2199
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Skid	<b>Seats:</b>	3
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	April 1, 1998 100 hour	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	2450 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	25 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	6227 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>ELT:</b>	Not installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	VO-435-A1D
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	PENGUIN-AIR HELICOPTER, INC.	<b>Rated Power:</b>	260 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<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>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	DTS ,22 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	5 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	14:53 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	90°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	4 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	6 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	160°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	27°C / 22°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	N/A - None - Haze		
<b>Departure Point:</b>		<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>		<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	14:55 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>	
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Forced landing

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	2 Minor	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	3 Minor	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	30.419496,-86.610946(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Kennedy, Jeffrey
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	GAIL LIEURANCE; BIRMINGHAM , AL RODGER L HOLMSTROM; BIRMINGHAM , AL
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	February 15, 2001
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=38515">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=38515</a>

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