



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	LOLO, Montana	Accident Number:	SEA97LA119
Date & Time:	May 22, 1997, 11:30 Local	Registration:	N95NW
Aircraft:	Garlick UH-1H	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 133: Rotorcraft ext. load		

Analysis

The pilot reported that his fuel gauge showed 150 lbs of fuel remaining and he decided to move a large stump prior to landing. As he was hovering about 150 feet over the stump waiting for the stump to be hooked up, the helicopter suddenly lost power. He made a tight spiral down to the service landing area, but landed very hard.

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 failure to refuel.

Findings

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

Findings

1. (C) FUEL SYSTEM - EXHAUSTION
2. (C) REFUELING - NOT PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Occurrence #3: HARD LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Factual Information

On May 22, 1997, approximately 1130 mountain daylight time, N95NW, a Bell UH-1H, sustained substantial damage when it lost power and landed hard near Lolo, Montana. The commercial pilot was not injured. The flight was conducted in visual meteorological conditions with no flight plan filed. The flight had departed the same area about 1010.

The pilot reported that the fuel gauge showed 150 pounds and he decided to remove a large stump to the slash pile prior to landing. The stump was situated approximately 40 feet from the service landing area. As he was hovering about 150 feet over the stump waiting for the stump to be hooked up, the helicopter suddenly lost power. He made a tight spiral down to the service landing area, but landed very hard. The operator reported no mechanical malfunctions and listed the engine failure as "fuel exhaustion". An FAA inspector who inspected the wreckage, stated that a total of about 1 and 1/2 gal of fuel was drained from the tanks.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	50, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
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 3 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	January 29, 1997
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	8197 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2613 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Garlick	Registration:	N95NW
Model/Series:	UH-1H UH-1H	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	65-12871
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	9500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	T53-L-13B
Registered Owner:	REYNOLDS AVIATION INC.	Rated Power:	1400 Horsepower
Operator:	NORTHWEST HELICOPTERS	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	WYFL

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	
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	21°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	10:10 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:	46.729076,-114.359603(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Mcguire, Robert
Additional Participating Persons:	LEO WADEKAMPER; HELENA , MT
Original Publish Date:	April 10, 1998
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=42613

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