



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	WENATCHEE, Washington	Accident Number:	SEA99LA022
Date & Time:	December 17, 1998, 15:59 Local	Registration:	N893FW
Aircraft:	Hiller UH-12E	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation		

Analysis

The game survey flight had departed Wenatchee about 2.5 hours before the accident. The pilot had planned on landing at Brewster, Washington, where a truck was located for refueling during the survey flight. Weather at the refueling site precluded landing, so the pilot had elected to return to Wenatchee. He experienced a loss of engine power and autorotated to the surface one mile northwest of Wenatchee, Washington. Immediately before the loss of power, he noted a low fuel-pressure light. He stated to FAA inspectors that he had sustained fuel exhaustion.

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 accomplish refueling.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL

Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

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

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Findings

3. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND

Factual Information

On December 17, 1998, at 1559 Pacific standard time, a Hiller UH-12E, N893FW, experienced a loss of engine power and autorotated to the surface one mile northwest of Wenatchee, Washington. The commercial pilot and his two passengers were uninjured, but the helicopter sustained substantial damage. No flight plan was filed for the 14 CFR 91 game survey flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The pilot disabled the ELT immediately after the impact.

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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	53, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	February 2, 1998
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	9750 hours (Total, all aircraft), 95 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Hiller	Registration:	N893FW
Model/Series:	UH-12E UH-12E	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	5085
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	November 30, 1998 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2850 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	19 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3204 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	VO-540-C2A
Registered Owner:	FALCON WEST HELICOPTERS	Rated Power:	309 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	On-demand air taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	OFWA

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:	Unknown	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 4000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	20 knots / 25 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	270°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	-2°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Light - None - Snow		
Departure Point:	(EAT)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	BREWSTER , WA	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	13:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	

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:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	47.489292,-120.190956(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Stockhill, Michael
Additional Participating Persons:	PHIL VITTETOE; SPOKANE , WA
Original Publish Date:	January 11, 2000
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=45839

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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](#).