



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	VACAVILLE, California	Accident Number:	LAX00LA124
Date & Time:	March 12, 2000, 15:38 Local	Registration:	N9763Z
Aircraft:	Bell 47G	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

The pilot was flying low while applying chemicals to a field. He completed spraying approximately half of the field, when he collided with wires that he did not see. He extricated himself from the helicopter, which subsequently caught fire.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: Failure of the pilot to see wires and maintain clearance while flying at a low altitude.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - AERIAL APPLICATION

Findings

1. OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION
2. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) ALTITUDE - LOW - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On March 12, 2000, about 1538 hours Pacific standard time, a Bell 47G, N9763Z, sustained substantial damage after colliding with wires while maneuvering on an aerial application flight near Vacaville, California. North Coast Helicopters, Inc., operated the helicopter under the provisions of 14 CFR Part 137. The commercial pilot sustained minor injuries. The helicopter was transported to the job site on a trailer and departed to dispense chemicals about 10 minutes prior to the mishap. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed.

The pilot stated he was at a low altitude and completed spraying approximately half of the field. He did not see the wires prior to impact. He extricated himself from the helicopter, which subsequently caught fire.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Private	Age:	36, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
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:	October 22, 1999
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	3450 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2840 hours (Total, this make and model), 3313 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 100 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Bell	Registration:	N9763Z
Model/Series:	47G 47G	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	29
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	September 19, 1999 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2350 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	36 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	9084 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	VO-435-A1F
Registered Owner:	NORTH COAST HELICOPTERS	Rated Power:	260 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	NCQG

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	VCB ,114 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	10 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	15:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	10°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	170°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	20°C / 10°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	
Departure Time:	15:28 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	38.410614,-122.010536(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Plagens, Howard
Additional Participating Persons:	MARLO BOWMAN; SACRAMENTO , CA
Original Publish Date:	July 17, 2001
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=48807

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