Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	KING CITY, California	**Accident Number:**	LAX00LA280
Date & Time:	July 28, 2000, 05:40 Local	**Registration:**	N7885S
Aircraft:	Bell 47G-5	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:		**Injuries:**	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

The pilot of the agricultural application helicopter took off at dawn and was en route to the spraying location beneath a 300-foot overcast cloud ceiling with 1/4 to 1/2-mile flight visibility. The helicopter flew into a fog bank and the pilot lost visual contact with the ground. He lowered the collective control and descended toward the ground to regain visual reference; however, the tail rotor contacted power transmission wires before he regained visual contact. He then lowered the collective further and reduced engine power to regain directional control and the helicopter made a hard impact with the ground in an upright attitude.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's intentional flight into adverse weather which resulted in loss of visual reference and flight into power transmission wires and terrain.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Findings
1. OBJECT - WIRE,TRANSMISSION
2. (C) FLIGHT INTO ADVERSE WEATHER - INTENTIONAL - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - ENCOUNTERED
4. DESCENT - INTENTIONAL - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings
5. TERRAIN CONDITION - OPEN FIELD

Factual Information

On July 28, 2000, at 0540 hours Pacific daylight time, a Bell 47G-5 helicopter, N7885S, was substantially damaged by impact with high-tension electrical power transmission wires and subsequent impact with terrain, 1/4 mile west of King City, California. The commercial pilot was not injured. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed for the agricultural application flight, which was operated under 14 CFR Part 137 by Soilserv, Incorporated. The helicopter departed from the Mesa Del Rey airport, King City, at 0535

The pilot reported that he did not obtain a preflight weather briefing. He had taken off at dawn and was en route to the spraying location beneath a 300-foot solid overcast with 1/4 to 1/2-mile visibility. He flew into a fog bank and lost visual contact with the ground. He lowered the collective control and descended toward the ground to regain visual reference; however, the tail rotor contacted the power lines before he regained visual contact. He then lowered the collective further and reduced engine power to regain directional control and the aircraft impacted the ground in an upright attitude.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	**Age:**	29,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--no waivers/lim.	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	August 16, 1999
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	
Flight Time:	4030 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1225 hours (Total, this make and model), 3975 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 115 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 85 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Bell	**Registration:**	N7885S
Model/Series:	47G-5 47G-5	**Aircraft Category:**	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	**Serial Number:**	7873
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	**Seats:**	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	July 17, 2000 100 hour	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	2750 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	22 Hrs	**Engines:**	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5116 Hrs	**Engine Manufacturer:**	Lycoming
ELT:	Not installed	**Engine Model/Series:**	VO-435-B1A
Registered Owner:	SOILSERV, INC.	**Rated Power:**	265 Horsepower
Operator:		**Operating Certificate(s) Held:**	
Operator Does Business As:		**Operator Designator Code:**	LSHG

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument (IMC)	**Condition of Light:**	Dawn
Observation Facility, Elevation:	SNS ,84 ft msl	**Distance from Accident Site:**	30 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	04:53 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	300°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	**Visibility**	8 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 400 ft AGL	**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	8 knots /	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:	260°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	52°C / 50°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	(KIC)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	None
Destination:		**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:	05:35 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 None	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	**Latitude, Longitude:**	36.200958,-120.939941(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Parker, Richard
Additional Participating Persons:	TERJE KRISTIANSEN; SAN JOSE , CA
Original Publish Date:	November 1, 2001
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=49846