



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

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).