



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	EC 270,	<b>Accident Number:</b>	FTW01LA081
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	March 20, 2001, 10:41 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N376AL
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Sikorsky SK-76A	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	None
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal, 8 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 135: Air taxi & commuter - Non-scheduled		

## Analysis

After a normal landing to an offshore platform, the helicopter was parked with the engine and main rotor blades operating at idle. A passenger entered the base of the heliport unexpectedly and unescorted through a stairwell that was located near the nose of the helicopter. The passenger walked into the path of the main rotor blades, was struck by a main rotor blade and received fatal injuries.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the passenger's inadvertent encounter with the rotating main rotor blades.

### Findings

Occurrence #1: PROPELLER/ROTOR CONTACT TO PERSON  
Phase of Operation: STANDING - IDLING ROTORS

#### Findings

1. (C) PROPELLER/JET BLAST ENCOUNTER - INADVERTENT - PASSENGER

## Factual Information

On March 20, 2001, approximately 1041 central standard time, a Sikorsky SK-76A helicopter, registered to and operated by Air Logistics L.L.C., of New Iberia, Louisiana, was standing with rotors engaged on an offshore platform, East Cameron 270 (EC 270), when a passenger, attempting to board, was struck by a main rotor blade. The passenger sustained fatal injuries, and the pilot, co-pilot, and other passengers were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a company VFR flight plan was filed for the 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 135 on-demand domestic air taxi flight. At the time of the accident, the flight had just arrived on the platform to drop off three of its nine passengers, and was picking up three other passengers (one of whom was the fatally injured passenger) .

According to the pilot-in-command statement, after a normal landing to offshore platform EC 270, he "retarded the throttles" to idle. The co-pilot and one passenger exited the left side, and two passengers exited the right side of the helicopter. Approximately one minute later, the pilot heard a noise and saw (5 feet from the nose of the helicopter at his 2 o'clock position) that a passenger fell to the heliport. The pilot kept the helicopter running to keep the rotor blades away from assisting personnel. After the personnel were clear of the blades, the pilot shutdown the helicopter.

The passenger had entered the base of the heliport through a stairwell that was located near the nose of the helicopter. The nose of the helicopter was oriented at a heading of 230 degrees. At the time of the landing, the wind direction was variable from 300 to 020 degrees at 35 knots, gusting to 40 knots.

The co-pilot added that he "visually checked the front rotor tip path plane and it was set properly." The passenger came onto the heliport unexpectedly and unescorted.

According to the Sikorsky 76 Maintenance Manual (SA 4047-76-2, revision Apr 15/83), the main rotor blade's ground clearance while rotating at flight idle, is 8 feet, 1 inch, and the main rotor blade's ground clearance in the static position is 6 feet, 3.2 inches.

On March 18, 2001, the passenger attended a helicopter safety meeting that was held at the EC 270 platform. The safety meeting topics included: "beware of tail rotor, never carry any item vertically to chopper, and additional helicopter safety issues."

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline transport	<b>Age:</b>	49, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Center
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	Yes
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 1 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	May 22, 2000
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	Yes	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	October 24, 2000
<b>Flight Time:</b>	16347 hours (Total, all aircraft), 705 hours (Total, this make and model), 15179 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 179 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 40 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Co-pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline transport	<b>Age:</b>	55, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Right
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	Yes
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	September 22, 2000
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	Yes	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	March 1, 2000
<b>Flight Time:</b>	12211 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1918 hours (Total, this make and model), 10770 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 177 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 38 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Sikorsky	<b>Registration:</b>	N376AL
<b>Model/Series:</b>	SK-76A	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Helicopter
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	76002
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Retractable - Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	14
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	March 18, 2001 Continuous airworthiness	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	10500 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	3.8 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	2 Turbo shaft
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	18899.7 Hrs at time of accident	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Allison
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	C-30
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	Air Logistics Inc.	<b>Rated Power:</b>	1300 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	On-demand air taxi (135)
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	ALGA

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>		<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>		<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	35 knots / 40 knots	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	330°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	30.03 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	18°C / 10°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	EC 359, GM (NONE)	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	Company VFR
<b>Destination:</b>	EC 270, GM (NONE)	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	10:24 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	2 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	None
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	6 None	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal, 8 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Lemishko, Alexander
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Laurel W Johnson; FAA FSDO; Baton Rouge, LA
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	July 30, 2001
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=51967">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=51967</a>

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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](#).