



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Blythe, California	Accident Number:	LAX01LA245
Date & Time:	July 13, 2001, 08:20 Local	Registration:	N9281P
Aircraft:	Hiller UH-12E	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

During a chemical application pass, the pilot of the aerial application helicopter sensed a decrease in engine power and elected to make a precautionary landing. During the landing in a cotton field on irregular, wet ground, the right skid settled into the soil and the helicopter rolled onto its right side. In his subsequent report to the Safety Board, in the section entitled "Mechanical Malfunction Failure," the pilot checked "no."

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The selection by the pilot of an unsuitable precautionary landing site on soft, uneven terrain, which resulted in a rollover.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - AERIAL APPLICATION

Findings
1. REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

Occurrence #2: ROLL OVER
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Findings

2. TERRAIN CONDITION - SOFT
3. TERRAIN CONDITION - ROUGH/UNEVEN
4. (C) UNSUITABLE TERRAIN OR TAKEOFF/LANDING/TAXI AREA - SELECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. DYNAMIC ROLLOVER - ENCOUNTERED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On July 13, 2001, at 0820 hours Pacific daylight time, a Hiller UH-12E, N9281P, landed in soft soil and rolled onto its right side at Blythe, California. The commercial certificated pilot, the sole occupant, was not injured; however, the helicopter was substantially damaged. The aerial application flight was operated under 14 CFR Part 137 by H&H Aerial Applicators. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed. The helicopter departed from a local helipad near the work site at 0815.

The pilot told the Safety Board investigator that, following an application pass, he sensed a decrease in engine power and elected to make a precautionary landing. During the landing in a cotton field on irregular, wet ground, the right skid settled into the soil and the helicopter rolled onto its right side. In his report to the Safety Board, in the section entitled "Mechanical Malfunction Failure" the pilot checked "no."

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	45, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Center
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	January 20, 2001
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	December 15, 2000
Flight Time:	12000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2500 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Hiller	Registration:	N9281P
Model/Series:	UH-12E	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	5219
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	March 29, 2001 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	58 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1403 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	VO-540-C2A
Registered Owner:	Akana Francis H DBA	Rated Power:	305 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:	H&H Aerial Applicators	Operator Designator Code:	H4BG

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	
Observation Facility, Elevation:	BLH,397 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	07:56 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	250°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.88 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	36°C / 10°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Blythe, CA	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	08:15 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

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:	33.750404,-114.510475(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Parker, Richard
Additional Participating Persons:	THEODORE I NELSON; FAA Flt Stnds Dist Office; Riverside, CA
Original Publish Date:	February 5, 2002
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=52696

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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](#).