



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	La Belle, Florida	Accident Number:	ATL02LA128
Date & Time:	June 24, 2002, 09:00 Local	Registration:	N8486E
Aircraft:	Bell 47G-2A	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

The pilot was executing swath runs to apply herbicide solutions to weed plants. While finishing with the second load of spray, the pilot maneuvered to turn the helicopter around and struck unmarked power lines approximately 75 to 100 feet above the ground. The pilot then lost control of the helicopter, and it came down on its side and impacted trees. The pilot reported no mechanical malfunction. Examination of the wreckage revealed the main rotor system was damaged, the tail boom was separated, the canopy was shattered, and one skid was separated.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain visual lookout while maneuvering during an aerial application, which resulted in an in-flight collision with power lines and uncontrolled descent into terrain.

Findings

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

- Findings
1. OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION
 2. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

On June 24, 2002, at 0900 eastern daylight time, a Bell 47G-2A helicopter, N8486E, registered to and operated by Airwork Enterprises of Florida, Inc., collided with power lines while maneuvering in a grove in La Belle, Florida. The aerial application flight was operated by the pilot under the provisions of Title 14 CFR Part 137 with no flight plan filed. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The commercial pilot, the sole occupant, received minor injuries, and the helicopter sustained substantial damage. The flight originated in the grove in La Belle, Florida, about 0800.

The pilot was executing swath runs to apply herbicide solutions to weed plants. While finishing with the second load of spray, the pilot maneuvered to turn the helicopter around and struck unmarked power lines approximately 75 to 100 feet above the ground. The pilot stated he was not aware the wires were there. The pilot then lost control of the helicopter, and it came down on its side and impacted trees. The pilot reported no mechanical malfunction with the helicopter.

Examination of the wreckage revealed the main rotor system was damaged, the tail boom was separated, the canopy was shattered, and one skid was separated.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	46, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Helicopter	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	June 21, 2001
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	October 2, 2001
Flight Time:	3540 hours (Total, all aircraft), 350 hours (Total, this make and model), 45 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Bell	Registration:	N8486E
Model/Series:	47G-2A	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	2679
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	7341 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	VO-540
Registered Owner:	Airwork Enterprises of Florida, Inc.	Rated Power:	260 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	RSW,9 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	21 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	08:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	239°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.11 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	25°C / 24°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	La Belle, FL	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	08:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	26.744167,-81.433052

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Smith, Carrol A.
Additional Participating Persons:	Richard Kraemer; FAA - Ft. Lauderdale FSDO - 17; Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Original Publish Date:	April 15, 2003
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=55033

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