



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	BALMORHEA, Texas	<b>Accident Number:</b>	FTW83LA008
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	October 4, 1982, 14:15 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N8045F
<b>Aircraft:</b>	HUGHES TH-55A	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	2 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation		

## Analysis

A HUGHES HELICOPTER WAS DAMAGED WHEN IT LOST POWER DURING TAKEOFF AND WAS CRASHED INTO A TREE TO PREVENT IT FROM ROLLING DOWN A HILL. THE WEATHER WAS VMC AND NO FLIGHT PLAN WAS FILED. THE PILOT SAID THE MANIFOLD PRESSURE DECAYED FROM 22 INCHES TO 18 INCHES AND ROTOR RPM BEGAN TO BLEED OFF. THE PILOT TRIED TO REGAIN MANIFOLD PRESSURE BY REDUCING COLLECTIVE BUT WAS UNSUCCESSFUL. DENSITY ALTITUDE WAS 8,800 FEET. NO DISCREPANCIES, OTHER THAN IMPACT RELATED, WERE FOUND DURING AN INSPECTION OF THE ENGINE.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

### Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER  
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

#### Findings

1. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - HIGH DENSITY ALTITUDE

-----

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

- 3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH TERRAIN
- 4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY

-----

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

- 5. (F) OBJECT - TREE(S)
- 6. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - DOWNHILL

## Factual Information

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline transport; Commercial; Flight instructor	<b>Age:</b>	31, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Unknown
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane; Helicopter	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	January 22, 1982
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	UNK	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	5985 hours (Total, all aircraft), 280 hours (Total, this make and model), 5560 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 49 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	HUGHES	<b>Registration:</b>	N8045F
<b>Model/Series:</b>	TH-55A TH-55A	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Helicopter
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>		<b>Serial Number:</b>	46-0518
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Skid	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	Unknown	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1550 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	0 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	4394 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	LYCOMING
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	HIO-360-B1A
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	LOS HERMANOS DE LA FRONTERA	<b>Rated Power:</b>	180 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	LOS HERMANOS DE LA FRONTERA	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	

## 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>	14:15 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Scattered / 25000 ft AGL	<b>Visibility</b>	40 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Unknown	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	8 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	210°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	72°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	PECOS , TX	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	PECOS , TX	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	13:40 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Dirt
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	0 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry;Rough
<b>Runway Used:</b>	0	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	0 ft / 0 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	None

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	2 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	30.979259,-103.739196(est)

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):**

**Additional Participating Persons:**

**Original Publish Date:** October 4, 1983

**Last Revision Date:**

**Investigation Class:** [Class](#)

**Note:**

**Investigation Docket:** <https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=69876>

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](#).