



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Quarryville, Pennsylvania	Accident Number:	ERA09CA542
Date & Time:	September 26, 2009, 12:55 Local	Registration:	N233JA
Aircraft:	Schweizer 269C	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Collision during takeoff/land	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Air drop		

Analysis

The pilot had agreed to use his helicopter to participate in a publicity event at a golf course. The event consisted of landing in a designated area to pick up a load of golf balls, then dropping the golf balls from the hovering helicopter. Several days before the event, the pilot visited the golf course to survey the landing area. He was not advised to expect a marshaler. On the day of the accident, the helicopter approached the golf course, and entered a hover above the putting green that the pilot planned to land on. Several witnesses reported that a person on the ground began providing hand signals to direct the pilot. In response to the signals, the pilot began to back up the helicopter, and one of the landing skids contacted a wooden statue. The pilot was unable to regain control of the helicopter before it rolled onto its left side and struck the ground. The helicopter sustained substantial damage to the cabin area, skids and tail boom, and the tail rotor was separated. The pilot reported that there were no mechanical malfunctions or anomalies with the helicopter prior to the accident. Subsequent to the accident, it was determined that the marshaler was self-appointed, and that he did not have any formal training in marshaling aircraft. The nearest weather reporting station, located approximately 17 nautical miles north of the accident site, reported winds of 9 knots about the time of the accident.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: An untrained bystander's attempt to marshal the helicopter, which resulted in the helicopter's inadvertent encounter with an object.

Findings

Environmental issues	(general) - Effect on equipment
Personnel issues	Unnecessary action - Other
Personnel issues	Issuing instructions - Other

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing	Collision during takeoff/land (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	76, 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 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 9, 2007
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	December 24, 2007
Flight Time:	7760 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2964 hours (Total, this make and model), 7760 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Schweizer	Registration:	N233JA
Model/Series:	269C	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	S1798
Landing Gear Type:	N/A; Skid	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	July 21, 2009 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2050 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	286 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	VO-435 SERIES
Registered Owner:	C V C HELICOPTERS	Rated Power:	260 Horsepower
Operator:	Jay Leon Atkins	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	LNS,403 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	17 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	179°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 4400 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 6500 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	150°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.22 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	18°C / 9°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Darlington, MD	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Quarryville, PA	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	

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:	39.857498,-76.205558(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Huhn, Michael

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: March 3, 2010

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note: This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=74829>

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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](#).