



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	CENTRE, Alabama	Accident Number:	ATL93LA009
Date & Time:	October 9, 1992, 16:15 Local	Registration:	N31FG
Aircraft:	BELL 47G-3B-1	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

THE AG PILOT REPORTED THAT WHILE PERFORMING A MANEUVER (TURN TO REVERSE DIRECTION), HE ALLOWED THE MAIN ROTOR RPM TO DECAY. HE LOST CONTROL OF THE HELICOPTER, AND IT BOUNCED INTO A FIELD. THE AIRCRAFT BECAME AIRBORNE AGAIN, AND THE RPM DECAYED ONCE MORE. THE HELICOPTER THEN CRASHED INTO THE FIELD, AND THE TAIL BOOM WAS SEVERED BY THE MAIN ROTOR BLADES DURING IMPACT. THE PILOT REPORTED NO MECHANICAL MALFUNCTION OR FAILURE WITH THE HELICOPTER DURING THE ACCIDENT FLIGHT.

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 MAIN ROTOR RPM, WHICH RESULTED IN AN IN FLIGHT LOSS OF CONTROL AND COLLISION WITH TERRAIN.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO REVERSE DIRECTION

Findings

1. (C) ROTOR RPM - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	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; Helicopter	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	May 29, 1992
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	3400 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BELL	Registration:	N31FG
Model/Series:	47G-3B-1 47G-3B-1	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	3834
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 2, 2000 Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2950 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	TVO-435-B1A
Registered Owner:	COASTAL HELICOPTERS, INC.	Rated Power:	270 Horsepower
Operator:	SPETH, STEPHEN F.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	ANB ,611 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	36 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	15:50 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	195°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	7 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 20000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	90°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	11°C / 10°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	CENTRE , AL (A04)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(A04)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	15:45 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

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:	34.150562,-85.670158(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Hicks, Ralph

Additional Participating Persons: EDWARD H BLOUNT; BIRMINGHAM ,AL

Original Publish Date: June 21, 1993

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=8692>

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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](#).