



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	PACIFIC OCEAN, PO	<b>Accident Number:</b>	LAX94LA187
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	03/01/1994, 0830 PST	<b>Registration:</b>	N4712R
<b>Aircraft:</b>	BELL 206A	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	2 Fatal

**Flight Conducted Under:** Part 91: General Aviation - Aerial Observation

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## Analysis

According to a report from the operator, the helicopter had completed the assigned fish spotting mission and was returning to the ship when it disappeared from the ship's radar, about 3 miles short of the vessel. There were no known distress calls prior to the disappearance. A search of the area around the last known position of the helicopter revealed parts of an emergency float system known to have been installed on the helicopter, and the bodies of the pilot and spotter. No trace of additional aircraft components were found. The pilot was a Panamanian citizen who reportedly held a pilot certificate issued by the Republic of Panama. The fish spotter was a Mexican national who has not been identified.

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: UNDETERMINED  
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

### Findings

1. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

## Factual Information

On March 1, 1994, about 0830 hours Pacific standard time, a Bell 206A helicopter, N4712R, disappeared at sea under unknown circumstances in international waters at north latitude 17 degrees 56 minutes by west longitude 109 degrees 46 minutes. The helicopter, operated by L & M Offshore Corporation of Paitilla, Republic of Panama, was engaged in fish spotting operations from the Mexico registered tuna vessel, "El Quijote." Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time and a flight plan was filed with the ship. The helicopter is presumed to have been destroyed in the accident sequence. Both the pilot and the spotter on board the helicopter sustained fatal injuries. The flight originated from the ship on the day of the mishap at about 0730 hours as a local fish spotting mission.

According to a report from the operator, the helicopter had completed the assigned spotting mission and was returning to the ship when it disappeared from the ship's radar about 3 miles short of the vessel. There were no known distress calls prior to the disappearance. A search of the area around the last known position of the helicopter revealed parts of an emergency float system known to have been installed on the helicopter, and the bodies of the pilot and spotter. No trace of additional aircraft components were found.

The pilot was a Panamanian citizen who reportedly held a pilot certificate issued by the Republic of Panama. The fish spotter was a Mexican national who has not been identified.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial; Foreign; Private	<b>Age:</b>	33, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Right
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<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>	02/16/1994
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	6000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 600 hours (Total, this make and model), 200 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BELL	Registration:	N4712R
Model/Series:	206A 206A	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	240
Landing Gear Type:	Emergency Float; Skid	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	AAIP	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3350 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Turbo Shaft
Airframe Total Time:	10717 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	ALLISON
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	250-C20
Registered Owner:	XANADU BRANDS	Rated Power:	400 hp
Operator:	L & M OFFSHORE CORPORATION	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0000	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	30 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	SHIP EL QUIJOTE (NONE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0730 PST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):      JEFF      RICH,      Report Date:      11/14/1994

Additional Participating Persons:

Publish Date:

**Investigation Docket:**      NTSB accident and incident dockets serve as permanent archival information for the NTSB's investigations. Dockets released prior to June 1, 2009 are publicly available from the NTSB's Record Management Division at [pubinq@ntsb.gov](mailto:pubinq@ntsb.gov), or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/>.

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The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).