



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	POHNPEI, PO	Accident Number:	LAX99LA292
Date & Time:	09/01/1999, 1000	Registration:	N42054
Aircraft:	Hughes 369HS	Injuries:	2 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Aerial Observation		

Analysis

The helicopter took off from the fishing vessel to conduct tuna spotting operations, and crashed under unknown circumstances approximately 1 1/2 hours later. The pilot had made routine communication with the ship captain via radio about 10 minutes before the accident. No emergency calls were received by the ship. The helicopter was about 30 miles away from the ship at the time of the accident. The ship's crewmembers located only the helicopter's floats, pieces of the airframe, and the engine. The ship captain reported that the sea was flat and clear. There were no birds or fish noted around the accident site. The pilot had been on the ship since August 25, 1999, and had flown about 4 hours. The captain and crew reported that the pilot, who also performed duties as the mechanic, had not mentioned any mechanical problems with the aircraft. The operator estimated that the helicopter had approximately 64 gallons of fuel on board when it departed. No debris or contamination was noted in the fuel samples. The engine did not reveal any preimpact damage and appeared to have been rotating at the time of impact.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: An in-flight collision with the water for undetermined reasons.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER
2. REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Flight Instructor; Commercial	Age:	45
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Instructor Rating(s):	Helicopter
Flight Time:	8276 hours (Total, all aircraft), 650 hours (Total, this make and model), 100 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Hughes	Registration:	N42054
Model/Series:	369HS 369HS	Engines:	1 Turbo Shaft
Operator:	HOFFMAN HELICOPTERS INC.	Engine Manufacturer:	Allison
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	250-C20
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Aerial Observation		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Witness
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	Calm / ,
Temperature:	29° C	Visibility	30 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	FISHING VESSEL	Destination:	

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
Latitude, Longitude:			

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	NOELANI MARS	Adopted Date:	12/05/2000
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 , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/ .		

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