



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	BENSON, AZ	Accident Number:	LAX87LA255
Date & Time:	07/02/1987, 1400 MST	Registration:	N2123X
Aircraft:	BELL 206L-3	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious, 5 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Non-scheduled		

Analysis

A BELL HELICOPTER 206L-3 COLLIDED WITH WIRES WHILE MANEUVERING OVER AN UNDERGROUND TELEPHONE CABLE. THE PLT INDICATED THAT HE HAD JUST COMPLETED A 360 DEG RIGHT TURN AT THE REQUEST OF THE PAX AND WAS APRX 185 DEG THROUGH THE SECOND TURN WHEN HE STRUCK A UNMARKED SINGLE STRAND POWER CABLE. THE PLT NOTICED A BRIGHT ELECTRICAL FLASH IN THE AREA OF THE ACFTS WINDSHIELD CENTER POST. HE IMMEDIATELY ENTERED AUTOROTATION AT APRX 80 FT AGL AND 60 KTS INDICATED AIRSPEED. THE TERRAIN BELOW THE ACFT WAS A VEGETATED DRY FLAT SANDY WASH. THE HELO LANDING HARD COLLAPSING THE SKID TYPE LANDING GEAR AND THEN ROLLED OVER ON ITS RIGHT SIDE. THE PLT ALSO STATED THAT HE DID NOT SEE THE WIRES PRIOR TO THE COLLISION. THE WIRES WERE STRUNG ACROSS THE WASH WITH THE POLES MASKED BY CANYON WALLS ON EACH SIDE OF THE WASH. THE PLT DID NOT GIVE ANY INDICATION OF MECHANICAL FAILURE OR MALFUNCTION.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. (F) OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION
 2. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: HARD LANDING
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

3. (C) AUTOROTATION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #3: ROLL OVER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	33, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	12/02/1986
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	6700 hours (Total, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BELL	Registration:	N2123X
Model/Series:	206L-3 206L-3	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal; Utility	Serial Number:	51003
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	7
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	07/01/1987, AAIP	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	4250 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	3 Hours	Engines:	1 Turbo Shaft
Airframe Total Time:	1485 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	ALLISON
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	250-C30P
Registered Owner:	AIR SERVICES INTERNATIONAL	Rated Power:	650 hp
Operator:	AIR SERVICES INTERNATIONAL	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	TUS, 2641 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	35 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1505 MST	Direction from Accident Site:	96°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	50 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	320°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	40° C / 1° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	WILLCOX, AZ (P33)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	TUCSON, AZ (TUS)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1330 MST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	5 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 5 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	THOMAS H WILCOX	Report Date:	02/24/1989
Additional Participating Persons:	EARL NEWBERRY; SCOTTSDALE, AZ		
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 pubinquiry@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](#).