



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

<b>Location:</b>	Ruston, LA	<b>Accident Number:</b>	FTW03LA102
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	03/02/2003, 1200 CST	<b>Registration:</b>	N383MA
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Enstrom 280FX	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The 43-hour student helicopter pilot landed stated that he hovered the helicopter from the parking area to the taxiway for a west departure. After taxiing "at about a 2-3 foot skid height for about 100 yards, he settled the helicopter back down on the ground against a headwind, landing very, very gently." The pilot stated he started to "throttle down" the engine. At approximately 1/3 power, he heard a loud "splat," after which the helicopter "quivered." After shutting down the engine, the pilot exited the helicopter and noticed that the tail rotor was not turning. The 1986-model helicopter was reported to have accumulated a total of 1,609 hours since new. The investigation revealed that the tail cone separated and the associated bolt had fractured due to fatigue failure.

## Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The separation of the upper tail cone as a result of a fractured bolt due to fatigue.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: AIRFRAME/COMPONENT/SYSTEM FAILURE/MALFUNCTION  
Phase of Operation: STANDING - ENGINE(S) OPERATING

### Findings

1. (C) MISC ROTORCRAFT, TAIL CONE - SEPARATION
2. (F) MISCELLANEOUS, BOLT/NUT/FASTENER/CLAMP/SPRING - FRACTURED

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private; Student	<b>Age:</b>	48
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Flight Time:</b>	123 hours (Total, all aircraft), 43 hours (Total, this make and model), 53 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Enstrom	<b>Registration:</b>	N383MA
<b>Model/Series:</b>	280FX	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Operator:</b>	Herbert F. Vandenberg	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	HIO-360-F1AD
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual Conditions	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>		<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Pilot
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Broken / 3400 ft agl	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	6 knots / , 340°
<b>Temperature:</b>	11 °C	<b>Visibility</b>	10 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>			
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Ruston (RSN)	<b>Destination:</b>	Monroe, LA (MLU)

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	Ruston Municipal Airport (RSN)	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Unknown
<b>Runway Used:</b>	NA	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Unknown
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>			

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	32.514444, -92.588333		

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Douglas D Wigington	<b>Adopted Date:</b>	06/02/2004
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	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 <a href="mailto:pubinq@ntsb.gov">pubinq@ntsb.gov</a> , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/</a> .		

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