



# National Transportation Safety Board

## Aviation Accident Data Summary

<b>Location:</b>	Chesterfield, IN	<b>Accident Number:</b>	CHI06LA074
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	02/02/2006, 0143 EST	<b>Registration:</b>	N593AE
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Bell 206L-1	<b>Injuries:</b>	3 Serious
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Positioning - Air Medical (Medical Emergency)		

### Analysis

The emergency medical service (EMS) flight was dispatched at night to pickup a patient from a hospital. The pilot reported that after receiving the dispatch orders he went outside to assess the current weather conditions, which he described as being a "little hazy." The pilot then obtained the local weather radar depiction and surface weather conditions. The pilot determined the weather at the departure and destination was suitable for visual flight rules (VFR) operations. The pilot did not listen to the airport's automated weather observing system (AWOS) broadcast before departure. The helicopter departed and almost immediately entered instrument meteorological conditions. He elected to terminate the flight and began a right turn back toward the departure airport. The pilot stated that he had difficulty maintaining level flight and felt that the helicopter was climbing slightly during the turn. He thought the attitude indicator was giving a false indication because it was not moving and was "cocked off center about 30 degrees." The pilot verified that the circuit breaker for the attitude indicator was not tripped. He saw some ground lighting to the left of the helicopter and started a left turn toward the lights. The pilot remembered seeing two houses before impact and attempted to steer the helicopter between them. Global positioning system (GPS) data showed the helicopter departing to the north, and then it made a climbing right turn, followed by a climbing left turn. The helicopter's maximum recorded altitude during the left turn was about 1,035 feet above ground level (agl). The helicopter impacted two pine trees, utility lines, a residential structure, a tree, and a garage before coming to a stop. The helicopter traveled about 325 feet from the initial contact with the two pine trees to its final position. The local weather conditions were continually broadcast and accessible using a telephone or radio. About one hour before the accident, the airport's AWOS indicated that the sky was overcast at 400 feet agl and the surface visibility was 3 sm with mist. About two minutes after the accident, the airport's AWOS indicated that the sky was overcast at 400 feet agl and the ground visibility was 2 1/2 sm. During the accident flight, the helicopter was operating in instrument meteorological conditions (IMC). The pilot held an instrument rating, but the accident helicopter was not certified for flight in IMC. According to company documentation, the pilot had logged 26 hours of instrument experience since being hired in 1989. He had flown 13 hours during the prior 90 days, none of which were in IMC. The attitude indicator was bench-tested and no discrepancies were noted with its operation.

### Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain aircraft control after becoming spatially disorientated shortly after departure. Contributing to the accident was the pilot's inadequate preflight weather evaluation, his inadvertent flight into night instrument meteorological conditions, and the ground objects that the helicopter impacted during the descent.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER

Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

### Findings

1. (F) WEATHER EVALUATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - NIGHT
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
4. (F) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

### Findings

5. (F) OBJECT - TREE(S)
6. (F) OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION
7. (F) OBJECT - RESIDENCE
8. (F) OBJECT - BUILDING(NONRESIDENTIAL)

Occurrence #4: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

### Findings

9. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	50
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Flight Time:</b>	5865 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1369 hours (Total, this make and model), 4814 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 13 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 0 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Manufacturer:</b>	Bell	<b>Registration:</b>	N593AE
<b>Model/Series:</b>	206L-1	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Turbo Shaft
<b>Operator:</b>	Petroleum Helicopters, Inc.	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Allison
<b>Air Carrier Operating Certificate:</b>	On-demand Air Taxi (135)	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	250-C30P
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Positioning - Air Medical (Medical Emergency)		

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	AID, 919 ft msl	<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Weather Observation Facility
<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Instrument Conditions	<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Overcast / 400 ft agl
<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Night/Dark	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	Calm, Variable
<b>Temperature:</b>	2°C / 2°C	<b>Visibility</b>	2.5 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Anderson, IN (AID)	<b>Destination:</b>	Kokomo, IN

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	Anderson Municipal Airport (AID)	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	
<b>Runway Used:</b>	NA	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>			

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	3 Serious	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Andrew T Fox	<b>Adopted Date:</b>	01/31/2008
<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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