



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

<b>Location:</b>	Desert Center, CA	<b>Accident Number:</b>	LAX06FA156
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	05/01/2006, 1430 PDT	<b>Registration:</b>	C-FICL
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Robinson R44 Raven II	<b>Injuries:</b>	2 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Positioning		

## Analysis

The Canadian certificated commercial helicopter pilot was conducting a cross-country delivery flight with a non-rated passenger occupying the copilot seat. The passenger and pilot together had previously made delivery flights from the Robinson factory to Canada. Two witnesses saw the helicopter just before it impacted the ground and reported that the tail boom had separated from the fuselage. No witnesses were identified who saw the initial breakup sequence. Both main rotor blades were bent downward at significant angles, with one blade having penetrated the cabin on the right side with a downward slicing front to rear arc. The primary wreckage debris field was approximately 500 feet long on an easterly heading. The helicopter sustained damage consistent with a high-energy, fuselage level, vertical ground impact. Detailed post accident investigation of the engine, the airframe, and the control systems disclosed no evidence of any preimpact anomalies. The removable cyclic was installed on the left side copilot's position, contrary to manufacturer's recommendations when a non-rated passenger is seated in the left seat. The removable pedals and collective for the left side were not installed. The cyclic controls for both the pilot's and copilot's positions were broken from their respective mounting points. The copilot's cyclic grip exhibited inward crushing. The Safety Board adopted a Special Investigation Report on April 2, 1996, following the investigation into R22 and R44 accidents involving loss of main rotor control and divergence of the main rotor disk, which included a finding that the cause of the loss of main rotor control in many of the accidents "most likely stems from a large, abrupt pilot control input to a helicopter that is highly responsive to cyclic control inputs."

## Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: a loss of control and the divergence of the main rotor blade system from its normal rotational path for undetermined reasons.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT  
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

### Findings

1. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED  
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

## Findings

### 2. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND

#### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	63
<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>	1041 hours (Total, this make and model), 25 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 12 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

#### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Manufacturer:</b>	Robinson	<b>Registration:</b>	C-FICL
<b>Model/Series:</b>	R44 Raven II	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Operator:</b>	Zimmer Air Services, Inc.	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>Air Carrier Operating Certificate:</b>	None	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-540-AE1A5
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Positioning		

#### Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	BLH, 399 ft msl	<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Weather Observation Facility
<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual Conditions	<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None
<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	8 knots, 170°
<b>Temperature:</b>	38°C / 1°C	<b>Visibility</b>	10 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	TORRANCE, CA (TOA)	<b>Destination:</b>	BLYTHE, CA (BLH)

#### Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Patrick H Jones

Adopted Date: 11/29/2007

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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