



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Factual Report

Location:	Rocky Point, NC	Accident Number:	ATL06CA073
Date & Time:	05/02/2006, 1945 EST	Registration:	N288RH
Aircraft:	Robinson R44 Raven II	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None

Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation - Business

On May 2, 2006, at 1945 eastern standard time, a Robinson R44 Raven II, N288RH, registered to Cape Fear Helicopters, Inc., and operated by an individual as a 14 CFR Part 91 business flight, collided with a transmission line while executing a precautionary landing following a tail rotor chip detector warning light, in Rocky Point, North Carolina. The helicopter received substantial damage. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed. The commercial pilot reported no injuries. The flight originated from the Grand Strand Airport in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina on May 2, 2006, at 1900.

According to the pilot, during his flight to Burgaw, North Carolina, "my tail rotor chip light flickered. Approximately 20 seconds later it flickered again. Less than 1 minute later it came on and stayed on". He stated that he was familiar with the flight area enough to know there was a fire department directly across from his intended landing zone. He performed a precautionary landing in a flat, open field to shut down and inspect the helicopter. He said that on "the west side of 117N has tall pines and obscured the black Time Warner Cable TV Line. Since I could not see the Time Warner Cable line, but did realize there were phone and electric lines, I estimated I was sufficiently far enough away and below them based on my rotor tip/path/plain. I approached highway 117N to be close to a road in case something catastrophic occurred, rotated the helicopter 90 degrees to the north, was impacted by a strong lateral wind gust from the east. This wind abruptly swung my tail rotor into the low hanging Time Warner Cable TV line". He said the helicopter rotated another 90 degrees to an easterly heading, nosed down, from about 5 feet AGL, rolled to the left and impacted the ground. Examination of the tail rotor gearbox chip detector and associated electrical wiring found no evidence of contamination or electrical malfunctions. The closest weather reporting facility to the accident site was from the Wilmington International Airport, Wilmington, North Carolina, located 14 nautical miles north northeast of the accident site. The 1953 surface weather observation was: wind 220-degrees at 7 knots, visibility 10-statute miles, clear of clouds, temperature 18-degrees Celsius, dew point temperature 9-degrees Celsius, and altimeter 30.00 millimeters of mercury. The pilot further stated that there was "not a mechanical malfunction".

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	44, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Without Waivers/Limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	03/01/2006
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	03/01/2006
Flight Time:	3830 hours (Total, all aircraft), 108 hours (Total, this make and model), 27 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Robinson	Registration:	N288RH
Model/Series:	R44 Raven II	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Utility	Serial Number:	10253
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	02/01/2006, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2200 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	550 Hours at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540
Registered Owner:	Cape Fear Helicopters, Inv	Rated Power:	300 hp
Operator:	Andrew Weldon Mayes	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:	Cape Fear Helicopters, Inc.	Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Dusk
Observation Facility, Elevation:	ILM, 33 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	14 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1953 EST	Direction from Accident Site:	20°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	220°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	18° C / 9° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Myrtle Beach, SC (CRE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Burgaw, NC (7NC1)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1900 EST	Type of Airspace:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	34.445278, -77.881389

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Butch Wilson
Additional Participating Persons:	Leo McGinty; Greensboro FSDO-05; Greensboro, NC
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.
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/ .