



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

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<b>Location:</b>	Ojai, CA	<b>Accident Number:</b>	LAX07TA001
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	10/01/2006, 1100 PDT	<b>Registration:</b>	N189AC
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Erickson S64E	<b>Injuries:</b>	2 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Public Aircraft		

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## Analysis

The helicopter snorkel snagged on a dip tank and the pilot-in-command (PIC) lost control of the helicopter during a retardant dropping mission. The tank and the snorkel screen fitting both contained 90-degree edges, which allowed them to catch on one another, once they came into contact. These abrupt edges may have increased the likelihood of a snagged condition during flight. The PIC was positioning the helicopter into a second tank and the snorkel became caught on the tank. The PIC applied power and shortly thereafter, the helicopter impacted the ground on its right side. Normal procedures following a caught snorkel are to slowly maneuver the helicopter until the snag becomes free. The PIC had reported 1,620 hours of pilot-in-command (PIC) time in helicopters on his application.

## Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot-in-command's improper remedial action, which resulted in a loss of helicopter control. Contributing factors were the retardant tank and snorkel designs.

## Findings

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

### Findings

1. (F) EXTERNAL LOAD CABLE/HOOK - SNAGGED
2. (F) AERIAL APPLICATION EQUIPMENT - SNAGGED
3. (C) REMEDIAL ACTION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT  
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - AERIAL APPLICATION

### Findings

4. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

### Findings

5. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	40
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Flight Time:</b>	1291 hours (Total, all aircraft), 309 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

## Co-Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Flight Instructor; Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	48
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter
<b>Flight Time:</b>	4445 hours (Total, all aircraft), 525 hours (Total, this make and model), 4244 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Erickson	<b>Registration:</b>	N189AC
<b>Model/Series:</b>	S64E	<b>Engines:</b>	2 Turbo Shaft
<b>Operator:</b>	USDA- USFS	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Pratt & Whitney
<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>		<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	JFD12A-4A
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Public Aircraft		

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual Conditions	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	OXR, 45 ft msl	<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Weather Observation Facility
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	18 knots / , 280°
<b>Temperature:</b>	17° C	<b>Visibility</b>	6 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Lockwood Heliba, CA	<b>Destination:</b>	Ojai, CA

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	2 Minor	<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>	34.548333, -119.186667		

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Kristi Dunks

**Adopted Date:** 08/30/2007

**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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