



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Willows, CA	Accident Number:	WPR14CA363
Date & Time:	09/02/2014, 1300 PDT	Registration:	N516PJ
Aircraft:	HUGHES 369D	Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Business		

Analysis

While in cruise flight an unsecured jacket departed the helicopter through an open window. The tail rotor drive shaft sheared as a result of the jacket's contact with the tail rotors. The pilot subsequently initiated a forced landing to an orchard where during landing, the main rotors struck and separated the tailboom. The pilot reported no preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures with the helicopter that would have precluded normal operation.

Flight Events

Enroute - Miscellaneous/other
Enroute - Loss of control in flight

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to adequately secure cargo (a jacket), which resulted in the jacket exiting the cabin compartment and colliding with the tail rotor during cruise flight.

Findings

Aircraft-Aircraft handling/service-Loading-(general)-Incorrect use/operation - C
Personnel issues-Action/decision-Action-Incomplete action-Pilot - C
Environmental issues-Physical environment-Object/animal/substance-Tree(s)-Contributed to outcome
Environmental issues-Physical environment-Object/animal/substance-Debris/dirt/foreign object-Effect on equipment - C

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	67
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Single-engine; Helicopter
Flight Time:	22100 hours (Total, all aircraft), 6495 hours (Total, this make and model), 19005 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 140 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 46 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	HUGHES	Registration:	N516PJ
Model/Series:	369D	Engines:	1 Turbo Shaft
Operator:	PJ HELICOPTERS INC	Engine Manufacturer:	Rolls Royce/Allison
Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	Rotorcraft External Load (133); On-demand Air Taxi (135)	Engine Model/Series:	250-C20B
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Business		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	KCIC, 238 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Lowest Ceiling:	None
Condition of Light:	Day	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	10 knots, 180°
Temperature:	33°C / 8°C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	WILLOWS, CA (WLW)	Destination:	WILLOWS, CA (WLW)

Airport Information

Airport:	WILLOWS-GLENN COUNTY (WLW)	Runway Surface Type:	N/A
Runway Used:	N/A	Runway Surface Condition:	Vegetation
Runway Length/Width:			

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Patrick H Jones	Adopted Date:	10/27/2014
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.		
Investigation Docket:	http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=90007		

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