



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

Location:	Cameron, NC	Accident Number:	ERA17LA032
Date & Time:	11/01/2016, 1130 EDT	Registration:	N139RD
Aircraft:	BELL OH 58C	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

On November 1, 2016, about 1130 eastern daylight time, a Bell OH-58C, N139RD, operated by Helicopter Applicators Inc., was substantially damaged following a tailboom separation during the initial climb after takeoff in Cameron, North Carolina. The commercial pilot incurred minor injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed for the planned local aerial application flight. The helicopter was operated under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 137.

According to the pilot, he stated he flew earlier in the day at a different field, spraying a herbicide and made approximately 12 landings on a truck to refill the herbicide spray. He subsequently flew to a different field and sprayed one load of herbicide, landed and waited for the loading crew to arrive at the new field. Once the loading crew arrived and loaded the helicopter with 80 gallons (720 pounds) of herbicide, he took off and climbed to about 50 feet. Approximately 200 yards away, he heard a loud bang and the helicopter fell to the ground.

According to a witness, the tailboom moved to the left and then went straight-up into the main rotor system. He further stated that the helicopter then fell straight down to the ground and he ran over to help the pilot out of the helicopter. He added that it looked like the tailboom became loose at the main frame attachment points.

Examination of the wreckage by a Federal Aviation Administration inspector revealed that the tailboom separated and made contact with the main rotor blades.

The helicopter was retained for further investigation.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	BELL	Registration:	N139RD
Model/Series:	OH 58C NO SERIES	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Amateur Built:	No		
Operator:	HELICOPTER APPLICATORS INC	Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	Agricultural Aircraft (137)

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	SOP, 461 ft msl	Observation Time:	1556 UTC
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 2500 ft agl	Temperature/Dew Point:	16° C / 10° C
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	5 knots, 70°	Visibility	10 Miles
Altimeter Setting:	30.36 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Departure Point:	Cameron, NC	Destination:	Cameron, NC

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Daniel P Boggs
Additional Participating Persons:	Mike Foster; FAA; Greensboro, NC
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.