



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Carson City, NV	Accident Number:	GAA19CA039
Date & Time:	10/27/2018, 1445 PST	Registration:	N1032F
Aircraft:	Bell OH 58A	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Aerial Observation		

Analysis

The pilot reported that, while maneuvering at low altitude along a highway, the sun was in line with the helicopter's direction of travel and in his eyes. When the helicopter was about 200 ft above ground level, the main rotor blades struck three power lines strung across the highway. He executed an emergency landing without further incident. The pilot added that the unmarked wires crossed the highway from behind one hill to behind an adjacent hill on the other side of the highway and that the power line poles were not visible due to blocking terrain.

The helicopter sustained substantial damage to the main rotor blades.

The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions with the helicopter that would have precluded normal operation.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot's failure to maintain clearance from power lines while maneuvering at a low altitude in hilly terrain. Contributing to the accident was the pilot's inability to determine the airplane's altitude due to sun glare.

Findings

Personnel issues	Task monitoring/vigilance - Pilot (Cause)
Environmental issues	Wire - Effect on operation (Cause)
	Glare - Effect on personnel (Cause)
	Mountainous/hilly terrain - Contributed to outcome

Factual Information

History of Flight

Maneuvering-low-alt flying	Low altitude operation/event
Maneuvering	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT) Off-field or emergency landing

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Flight Instructor; Commercial; Private	Age:	54, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	5-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Helicopter	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With Waivers/Limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	01/12/2018
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	10/18/2018
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 6912 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2025 hours (Total, this make and model), 4696 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 113 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 21 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Bell	Registration:	N1032F
Model/Series:	OH 58A No Series	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	70-15595
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	08/10/2018, 100 Hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3200 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Turbo Shaft
Airframe Total Time:	7027 Hours at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Rolls Royce
ELT:	C126 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	T63-A720
Registered Owner:	Washoe County Sheriffs Office	Rated Power:	420 hp
Operator:	Washoe County Sheriffs Office	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KCXP, 4699 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	4 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	2215 UTC	Direction from Accident Site:	115°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots / 15 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	280°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.11 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	24° C / -3° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Reno, NV (RNO)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Carson City, NV (CXP)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1245 PDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	39.208889, -119.804722 (est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Eleazar Nepomuceno	Report Date:	03/20/2020
Additional Participating Persons:	Aaron Southerland; FSDO; Reno, NV		
Publish Date:	03/20/2020		
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.		
Investigation Docket:	http://dms.ntsb.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=98559		

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