



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Reynoldsville, Illinois	Accident Number:	CEN21LA421
Date & Time:	September 15, 2021, 15:00 Local	Registration:	N166LW
Aircraft:	ROBINSON HELICOPTER CO R66	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

The pilot reported that during an aerial application flight, the wind was about 10-15 mph from the south. During the flight, the pilot noted that the wind created a “pocket of turbulence” over a wire due to a gap in nearby trees. As the helicopter went over the wire, a pocket of descending air pushed the helicopter into the wire. The pilot made an uneventful precautionary landing at his nearby landing site; the main rotor blades sustained substantial damage. The pilot reported there were no mechanical failures or malfunctions that would have precluded normal operations.

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 the wire during low altitude operations in windy conditions.

Findings

Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Environmental issues	Tree(s) - Effect on operation
Environmental issues	Gusts - Effect on operation

Factual Information

History of Flight

Maneuvering-low-alt flying	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT) (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	25, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	Unknown
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	December 15, 2020
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	ROBINSON HELICOPTER CO	Registration:	N166LW
Model/Series:	R66	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	2017	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	0766
Landing Gear Type:	None; Skid	Seats:	5
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Rolls Royce
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	250-C300/A1
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	300 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Agricultural aircraft (137)

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KCGI, 352 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	12 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	15:00 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	225°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	30°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	29.94 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	29° C / 19° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	McClure, IL	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Reynoldsville, IL	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Unknown

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	37.3673, -89.3951(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Link, Samantha		
Additional Participating Persons:	Clive Adams; Federal Aviation Administration; Springfield, IL		
Original Publish Date:	April 20, 2022	Investigation Class:	4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.		
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=103884		

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).