



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Batavia, New York	Accident Number:	ERA22LA007
Date & Time:	October 6, 2021, 21:16 Local	Registration:	N505TJ
Aircraft:	BELL HELICOPTER TEXTRON CANADA 429	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Controlled flight into terr/obj (CFIT)	Injuries:	4 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Positioning		

Analysis

The pilot reported that he decided to perform a practice approach to the runway using night vision goggles. He set up the approach and activated the autopilot. About 200 ft above the ground, the helicopter inadvertently entered a fog bank and the pilot lost visual reference to the runway. He attempted to perform a climbing right turn but forgot to deactivate the autopilot. The autopilot initiated a descent into the fog, the pilot maintained a level attitude, and shortly thereafter the helicopter impacted the ground and bounced. The pilot attempted to initiate a climb; however, the helicopter impacted the ground a second time, which resulted in substantial damage to the fuselage. The pilot reported no preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures 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 disengage the autopilot prior to climbing out of a fog bank.

Findings

Aircraft	Directional control - Not attained/maintained
Aircraft	Autopilot system - Incorrect use/operation
Personnel issues	Use of equip/system - Pilot
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Environmental issues	Fog - Contributed to outcome

Factual Information

History of Flight

Approach	Controlled flight into terr/obj (CFIT) (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight engineer; Private	Age:	54, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Helicopter	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	February 19, 2021
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	April 23, 2021
Flight Time:	3583 hours (Total, all aircraft), 621 hours (Total, this make and model), 3583 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 25 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 9 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Passenger Information

Certificate:		Age:	
Airplane Rating(s):		Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):		Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:		Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:			

Passenger Information

Certificate:	Age:	
Airplane Rating(s):	Seat Occupied:	Center
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot: No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:		

Passenger Information

Certificate:	Age:	Female
Airplane Rating(s):	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot: No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BELL HELICOPTER TEXTRON CANADA	Registration:	N505TJ
Model/Series:	429	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	2010	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	57029
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	9
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	September 28, 2021 Continuous airworthiness	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	7000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	2860 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Pratt & Whitney
ELT:	C126 installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	PW207D1
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	550 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	On-demand air taxi (135)

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Night
Observation Facility, Elevation:	GVQ, 913 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	20:54 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	21°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 1400 ft AGL	Visibility	
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	10°C / 9°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	In the vicinity - None - Fog		
Departure Point:	Rochester, NY (ROC)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	Batavia, NY	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:	21:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	GENESEE COUNTY GVQ	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	913 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	10/28	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5499 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Straight-in

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	3 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	4 None	Latitude, Longitude:	43.034158, -78.167864(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Kemner, Heidi		
Additional Participating Persons:	Robert Cunningham; FAA/FSDO; Rochester, NY		
Original Publish Date:	April 29, 2022	Investigation Class:	4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.		
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=104073		

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