



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

---

<b>Location:</b>	Covelo, California	<b>Accident Number:</b>	WPR22LA031
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	October 28, 2021, 12:00 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N27TK
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Bell 206L-3	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)	<b>Injuries:</b>	4 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Aerial observation		

---

## Analysis

The pilot of the helicopter reported that, he was conducting a local area photography/video flight with passengers. Before departure he had removed the doors and provided a preflight safety briefing, which included briefing his passengers on securing their belongings. While in cruise flight, a passenger's jacked departed the helicopter and became lodged on the synchronized elevator. The pilot simultaneously felt an impact and noted resistance against the cyclic control. A precautionary landing was made without further incident. The tail rotor drive shaft was substantially damaged.

The pilot reported no preaccident 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:

A passenger's unsecured object departed the cabin resulted in a collision with the tail rotor drive shaft.

## Findings

---

<b>Personnel issues</b>	Understanding/comprehension - Passenger
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Debris/dirt/foreign object - Contributed to outcome

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

Enroute	Cabin safety event
Enroute-cruise	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT) (Defining event)

### Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor; Private	Age:	29, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	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 1 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	June 20, 2021
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	September 22, 2021
Flight Time:	1701 hours (Total, all aircraft), 87 hours (Total, this make and model), 88 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 47 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

### Passenger Information

Certificate:		Age:	Male
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:	Female
Airplane Rating(s):	Seat Occupied:	Right
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:	Male
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	Registration:	N27TK
Model/Series:	206L-3 NO SERIES	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	1985	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	51138
Landing Gear Type:	None; Skid	Seats:	7
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	July 8, 2021 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	4150 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	45.4 Hrs	Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	14046 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Rolls Royce
ELT:	C126 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	C250-030P
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	650 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Rotorcraft external load (133), On-demand air taxi (135), Commercial air tour (136), Certificate of authorization or waiver (COA)

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KUKI,626 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	40 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	11:56 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	176°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.18 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	19° C / 12° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Ukiah, CA (UKI)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	Covelo, CA	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	11:40 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class E

## Airport Information

Airport:	UKIAH MUNI UKI	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	616 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

## 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:	39.7905, -123.26633(est)

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Cornejo, Tealeye		
Additional Participating Persons:	Dennis Thorpe; Federal Aviation Administration; Oakland, CA		
Original Publish Date:	May 4, 2022	Investigation Class:	4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.		
Investigation Docket:	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=104227">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=104227</a>		

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](#).