



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	MIDDLETOWN, Connecticut	Accident Number:	NYC92FA123
Date & Time:	June 20, 1992, 22:33 Local	Registration:	N117HH
Aircraft:	MBB BK-117	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal, 3 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Positioning		

Analysis

THE NORTHBOUND EMS HELICOPTER STRUCK AN UNMARKED STATIC WIRE 105 FT ABOVE THE GROUND, 1/4 MILE SOUTH OF HIS LANDING AREA. THE TAIL BOOM SEPARATED FROM THE FUSELAGE AND THE HELICOPTER DESCENDED UNCONTROLLABLY, STRIKING THE GROUND INVERTED, FATALLY INJURING ONE OCCUPANT. WHEN INTERVIEWED AFTER THE ACCIDENT, THE PILOT SAID HE DID NOT REMEMBER THE ACCIDENT. WITNESSES SAID THE NIGHT WAS DARK WITH FOG BEGINNING TO FORM, AND NO ABRUPT MANEUVERS WERE OBSERVED PRIOR TO THE WIRE STRIKE. THE INVESTIGATION FOUND THE PILOT HAD NOT MADE A RECON OF THE AREA, NOR HAD HE COMMUNICATED THAT HE HAD IDENTIFIED THE LANDING AREA WHEN THE WIRE STRIKE OCCURRED. THERE WERE NUMEROUS EMERGENCY VEHICLES IN THE AREA WITH RED AND BLUE FLASHING LIGHTS WHEN THE ACCIDENT OCCURRED. ADDITIONALLY, NEITHER THE PILOT OR HOSPITAL COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR WHO TOOK THE REQUEST FOR THE HELICOPTER, HAD REQUESTED ANY HAZARD INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSED LANDING AREA.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: A WIRE STRIKE AFTER THE PILOT MADE A DECISION TO CONTINUE THE APPROACH INTO AN AREA OF HAZARDS. FACTORS RELATED TO THE ACCIDENT WERE THE FAILURE OF THE PILOT AND THE HOSPITAL COMMUNICATOR TO REQUEST ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION ABOUT THE LANDING AREA AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

1. (F) INFORMATION - NOT OBTAINED - OTHER PERSON
2. (F) INFORMATION - NOT OBTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
4. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
5. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. VISUAL LOOKOUT - NOT POSSIBLE - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. OBJECT - WIRE,STATIC

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	49, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	September 17, 1991
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	4352 hours (Total, all aircraft), 801 hours (Total, this make and model), 37 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 13 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	MBB	Registration:	N117HH
Model/Series:	BK-117 BK-117	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	7015
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 6, 1992 AAIP	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	7055 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	23 Hrs	Engines:	2 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	3625 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	LTS-101-650B1
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	650 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	On-demand air taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	DYRA

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument (IMC)	Condition of Light:	Night/dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	HFD ,12 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	20 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	22:50 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	35°
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	4 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 6000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	19° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Fog		
Departure Point:	HARTFORD , CT (OCT9)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	22:22 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Straight-in

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal, 1 Serious	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal, 3 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Hancock, Robert

Additional Participating Persons:
BURT LABBEE; WINDSOR LOCKS , CT
TIM OLMSTEAD; WINDSOR LOCKS , CT
BOB PHOENIX; STRATFORD , CT
G.E. SEMPERBON; STRATFORD , CT

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Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=37065>

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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](#).