



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	GLIDE, Oregon	Accident Number:	SEA97LA072
Date & Time:	March 14, 1997, 09:00 Local	Registration:	N545HA
Aircraft:	Hiller UH-12E	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

While maneuvering his helicopter to finish off the aerial application of chemicals on a field of coniferous trees, the pilot accidentally flew into a power transmission line that ran across the center of the field. According to the pilot, he knew the power line was there, but he had trouble seeing it because of the ambient lighting conditions caused by the overcast sky.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: failure of the pilot to maintain clearance from a power transmission line. Factors relating to the accident included ambient light conditions, which made the power line hard to see.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - AERIAL APPLICATION

Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - OTHER
2. (F) OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION
3. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On March 14, 1997, approximately 0900 Pacific standard time, a turbine-powered Hiller UH-12E helicopter, N545HA, impacted an electrical transmission wire during a 14 CFR Part 137 aerial application flight near Glide, Oregon. The airline transport pilot received minor injuries, and the aircraft, which was being operated by Western Helicopter Services, Inc., sustained substantial damage. At the time of the accident, the aircraft had been in the air about ten minutes, and visual meteorological conditions prevailed.

According to the pilot, who was spraying coniferous trees, he had finished most of the field of trees and was using up his remaining chemical by adding to areas that may not have received full coverage. He knew there was a power line running through the center of the field, but he had trouble seeing it in the light conditions caused by the overcast sky. While maneuvering around the field, he accidentally flew into the wire, resulting in the helicopter's main rotor mast and main rotor blades impacting the wire.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport	Age:	63, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	January 13, 1997
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	16600 hours (Total, all aircraft), 7000 hours (Total, this make and model), 16000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 65 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Hiller	Registration:	N545HA
Model/Series:	UH-12E UH-12E	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	5045
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	February 3, 1997 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2850 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	73 Hrs	Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	7064 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Allison
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	250-C20
Registered Owner:	WESTERN HELICOPTER SERVICE	Rated Power:	400 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	7 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 3000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	10°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	08:50 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:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	43.239723,-123.000183(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Anderson, Orrin

Additional Participating Persons: JOHNNY MILLER; PORTLAND , OR

Original Publish Date: May 30, 1997

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=42572>

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