



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Sandersville, Georgia	Accident Number:	ERA23LA295
Date & Time:	June 25, 2023, 19:30 Local	Registration:	N919AC
Aircraft:	BELL HELICOPTER TEXTRON 206B	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

The pilot stated that while conducting agricultural spraying operations, he flew back to the fuel truck for fuel. He radioed his spotter and asked if the area was clear, and the spotter told him it was. He was attempting to land on a trailer when the tail rotor came into contact with some tree limbs and several tail rotor blades separated from the helicopter. The helicopter immediately lost tail rotor authority and began to yaw. The pilot then tried to move the helicopter away from the trailer and land on the ground. The tail rotor and gearbox separated from the helicopter before the pilot landed the helicopter on the ground. The helicopter's empennage was substantially damaged during the accident sequence. The pilot reported that there were 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 maintain clearance of trees during landing, which resulted in a tail rotor contact with tree limbs and a subsequent loss of control.

Findings

Environmental issues	Tree(s) - Awareness of condition
Personnel issues	Identification/recognition - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing-flare/touchdown	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT) (Defining event)
Maneuvering	Loss of control in flight

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	41, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-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; Instrument helicopter	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	May 15, 2023
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	May 4, 2022
Flight Time:	7331 hours (Total, all aircraft), 872 hours (Total, this make and model), 7182 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 72 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 72 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BELL HELICOPTER TEXTRON	Registration:	N919AC
Model/Series:	206B	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	1988	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	4020
Landing Gear Type:	High skid	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 16, 2023 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3200 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	12412 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Rolls-Royce
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	M250-C20
Registered Owner:	VERTICAL VEGETATION MANAGEMENT LLC	Rated Power:	420 Horsepower
Operator:	VERTICAL VEGETATION MANAGEMENT LLC	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:	KMLJ,384 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	24 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	19:30 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	296°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 5500 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	280°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	29.92 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	34°C / 20°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Sandersville, GA	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Sandersville, GA	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	32.977213,-82.807857(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Boggs, Daniel
Additional Participating Persons:	Steve Davidson; FAA/FSDO; Atlanta, GA
Original Publish Date:	August 31, 2023
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=192607

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The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).