



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Hanlontown, Iowa	Accident Number:	CEN23LA328
Date & Time:	July 26, 2023, 14:45 Local	Registration:	N467HA
Aircraft:	ROBINSON HELICOPTER R44	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Low altitude operation/event	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

The pilot reported that, while spraying at low altitude with power lines on the edges of the field, the airplane struck a cable, which resulted in substantial damage to the tail rotor blades and tail rotor drive shaft. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical malfunctions or failures with the helicopter that would have precluded normal operation and that he should have examined the field more thoroughly prior to conducting spray operations.

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 from a cable during spray operations.

Findings

Personnel issues	Monitoring environment - Pilot
Aircraft	Altitude - Not attained/maintained
Environmental issues	Wire - Contributed to outcome

Factual Information

History of Flight

Maneuvering-low-alt flying	Low altitude operation/event (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	31,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	February 28, 2023
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	November 23, 2022
Flight Time:	516 hours (Total, all aircraft), 148 hours (Total, this make and model), 489 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 116 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 111 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 9 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	ROBINSON HELICOPTER	Registration:	N467HA
Model/Series:	R44	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	2001	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	0984
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle; Skid	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2400 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	O-540
Registered Owner:	DYVIG ENTERPRISES LLC	Rated Power:	260 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	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:	KMCW,1188 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	10 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	14:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	162°
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:	29.85 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	32°C / 21°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Hanlontown, IA (PRI)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Hanlontown, IA (PRI)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:25 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	43.30689,-93.39383(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Folkerts, Michael
Additional Participating Persons:	Michael Newhall; Federal Aviation Administration; Des Moines, IA
Original Publish Date:	October 5, 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=192722

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).