



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

Location:	LaPlace, LA	Accident Number:	CEN22FA073
Date & Time:	December 14, 2021, 12:36 Local	Registration:	N150AS
Aircraft:	BELL HELICOPTER TEXTRON CANADA 407	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

On January 14, 2021, at 1236 central standard time, a Bell 407 helicopter, N150AS, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near LaPlace, Louisiana. The pilot was fatally injured. The flight was operating as a Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight.

According to preliminary information, the helicopter departed the Gonzales, Louisiana, area and was en route to the Lakefront Airport (KNEW), New Orleans, Louisiana. Automatic Dependent Surveillance–Broadcast (ADS–B) data tracked the helicopter’s flight path as it flew along I-10 towards New Orleans. The helicopter’s altitude varied between 75-175 ft AGL. About 0.88 miles from the accident site, the helicopter descended to 50 ft AGL as the pilot continued to fly down I-10. The last ADS-B point was near the intersection of transmission lines over I-10, at 1136:26. At this point, the helicopter was traveling about 104 knots groundspeed at 75 ft AGL.

The helicopter collided with the western guy wire suspended between two tall trusses. The guy wire was estimated about 130 ft above the bridge. Several commercial vehicles dash cameras captured the helicopter’s descent and impact with terrain. Video showed that the helicopter’s main rotor blades, mast, and transmission separated from the fuselage and were located in Lake Pontchartrain. A post impact fire ensued which consumed most of the fuselage. No video showing the helicopter’s collision with the transmission line has been recovered.

Following the accident, a United States Coast Guard helicopter was launched to the scene to provide search and rescue support. The USCG pilot reported that the weather was visual flight rules (VFR) at Louis Armstrong International Airport (KMSY), New Orleans, Louisiana, but deteriorated to marginal VFR to instrument flight conditions to the west. Low level fog allowed the stanchions of the power lines to be barely visible from the east. However, from the west, the fog layer was above the power lines with high cloud layers that reached about 1,200 ft. From a top-down view, there was very dense fog from all areas with a tall column of clouds to the west of the power line intersection where the accident occurred. They were able to orbit overhead

with good visibility at 500 ft over the shoreline, but at landfall to the west, a wall of clouds built to 1,200 ft.

All the major components of the helicopter were located at the accident site. The helicopter was recovered to a secure facility for further examination.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BELL HELICOPTER TEXTRON CANADA	Registration:	N150AS
Model/Series:	407 NO SERIES	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Amateur Built:			
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Designator Code:			

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:		Condition of Light:	
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KMSY, 4 ft msl	Observation Time:	12:20 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	8 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	23° C / 19° C
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	8 knots / , 110°
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 1600 ft AGL	Visibility:	10 miles
Altimeter Setting:	30.31 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Departure Point:	Gonzales, LA	Destination:	New Orleans, LA (KNEW)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	On-ground
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	30.076082, -90.402543 (est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Aguilera, Jason
Additional Participating Persons:	Richard Gordon; FAA FSDO; Baton Rouge, LA Nick Shepler; Rolls-Royce; Indianapolis, IN
Note:	