

AAIB Bulletin No: 10/93

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Category: 2.3

Aircraft Type and Registration: Bell 206B JetRanger III, G-HELE
No & Type of Engines: 1 Allison 250-C20J piston engine
Year of Manufacture: 1984
Date & Time (UTC): 27 August 1993 at 1710 hrs
Location: 10 miles south of Llandoverly, Wales
Type of Flight: Public Transport
Persons on Board: Crew - 1 Passengers - 1
Injuries: Crew - None Passengers - None
Nature of Damage: Both main rotor blades damaged beyond repair. Bent main rotor mast. All main rotor rotating components to be changed.
Commander's Licence: Airline Transport Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age: 38 years
Commander's Flying Experience: 4,952 hours (of which 2,457 were on type)
Last 90 days - 97 hours
Last 28 days - 43 hours
Information Source: Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was being used for low level photography during the making of a car commercial. The pilot specialises in this type of work and the aircraft is fitted with a number of remote camera mounting positions. A number of flights had been carried out during the day along a stretch of road in the Black Mountains. In each case the road had been temporarily closed under the supervision of the police and the area cleared of sheep by a local shepherd. The helicopter would then fly a reconnaissance of the road before commencing filming.

The accident flight was briefed to be two passes along the road, uphill, at low level, with the camera looking forward from a mounting under the nose of the aircraft. On the first live camera run, at approximately 60 kt, the helicopter side-slipped away from the road at a 60° left-hand bend in the road. During the second run the pilot tightened the turn to avoid a side-slip but the main rotor blades contacted a grassy knoll which rose to a height of five feet on the inside of the turn. The aircraft was levelled, the throttle closed to idle and an autorotative landing was successfully carried out alongside the

road. Neither occupant was injured and the aircraft systems were shut down normally before the aircraft was vacated.

The support crew, including the local fire brigade who were in attendance, were on the scene within one minute. Ground impact marks showed that each blade had struck once and that the imbedded granite had caused bending of the main spar and severe distortion of the upper and lower surfaces of both blades.