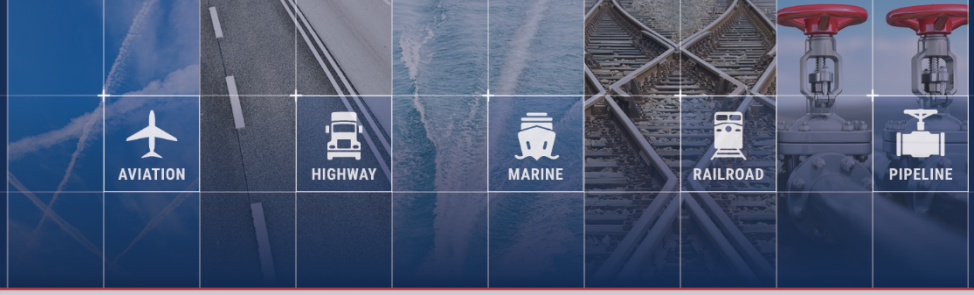

Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Mogadore, Ohio	**Accident Number:**	ERA25LA144
Date & Time:	March 14, 2025, 07:08 Local	**Registration:**	N262LH
Aircraft:	Schweizer 269C	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:	Low altitude operation/event	**Injuries:**	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot of the helicopter was on a cross-country flight and descended as the helicopter approached a reservoir, flying low over the water, but maintaining course. Night lighting conditions existed at the time, and witnesses near the scene reported it was very dark. The helicopter was flying at an estimated height of about 20 to 50 feet above the water when it impacted the top static wire of a set of power lines that ran perpendicular to the flight path. The helicopter then impacted the water about 200 ft from the shoreline. All major components of the helicopter were located at the accident site and postaccident examination of the wreckage revealed no evidence of any preimpact malfunction or failure of the helicopter that would have precluded normal operation. Multiple wire striation marks were present on the rotor blades and blade grips. The pilot's decision to fly at such a low altitude, over a wide body of water, and in dark conditions placed him at an increased risk of collision with unseen objects, such as wires.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot's decision to fly at low altitude, at night, and over water, which resulted in the helicopter's collision with power lines.

Findings

Personnel issues	Decision making/judgment - Pilot
Environmental issues	Dark - Effect on personnel
Personnel issues	Identification/recognition - Pilot
Environmental issues	Wire - Effect on equipment

Factual Information

History of Flight

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

On March 14, 2025, about 0708 eastern daylight time, a Schweizer 269C helicopter, N262LH, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Mogadore, Ohio. The pilot was fatally injured. The helicopter was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

The pilot departed from his home airport, Medina Municipal Airport (1G5), Medina, Ohio, about 0615 and flew to Wadsworth Municipal Airport (3G3), Wadsworth, Ohio, to refuel before continuing to Portage County Airport (POV), Ravenna, Ohio, where he planned to pick up a friend.

ADS-B data indicated that after takeoff from 3G3, the helicopter climbed to about 1,700 ft msl and turned left on a track of about 070° for 15 nautical miles. As the helicopter approached a reservoir, it began a right 360° descending turn, leveled off, and reestablished a northeast track before the data ended (see the figure).

According to several witnesses near the accident site, one of whom was located in a fishing boat in the reservoir very close to where the helicopter impacted, the helicopter passed low over the dam, at an estimated altitude of about 20 ft above the water, then proceeded to fly northeast over the water. It was “very dark” at the time of the accident. They observed the helicopter pass overhead, then it impacted power lines that ran roughly perpendicular to the flight path and about 600 ft in length from the northwest shoreline to the southeast shoreline. The impact resulted in a large flash and the helicopter descended in a nose-down attitude into the reservoir.

Figure. *Final part of the flight path as the helicopter approached the reservoir.*

The helicopter came to rest in about 20 ft of water, about 200 ft from the northwest shore of the reservoir. The elevation at the accident site was about 1,080 ft msl. The helicopter impacted the top static wire, which was about 50 ft above the water's surface. Marker balls were not installed on the power lines at the time of the accident.

Postaccident examination of the helicopter wreckage showed that the helicopter cockpit area was crushed and there was severe crush damage throughout the entire airframe. Each of the three rotor blades showed signatures consistent with impact damage with the water; however, one blade contained 12 wire striation marks on the leading edge. The damage on the blade penetrated the blade skin. In addition, there were three wire striation marks on the corresponding blade grips. The tail boom remained intact with some torsional twisting damage near the tail rotor gearbox. The tail rotor blades contained marks consistent with a wire strike. There was also a 1-inch area consistent with arc flash damage. The engine was undamaged and secure on its mounts. The panel, position, and beacon light switches were in the On position.

According to the United States Naval Observatory, night lighting conditions existed at the time of the accident; the beginning of civil twilight and sunrise occurred at 0710 and 0737, respectively, and the full moon set at 0748.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial; Remote	**Age:**	52,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	**Seat Occupied:**	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	**Restraint Used:**	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter	**Second Pilot Present:**	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Helicopter; Instrument airplane; Instrument helicopter	**Toxicology Performed:**	
Medical Certification:	Class 1 With waivers/limitations	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	February 4, 2025
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	
Flight Time:	3356 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Schweizer	**Registration:**	N262LH
Model/Series:	269C	**Aircraft Category:**	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	2009	**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	**Serial Number:**	S1926
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	**Seats:**	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 10, 2025 Annual	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	2050 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		**Engines:**	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3545.8 Hrs as of last inspection	**Engine Manufacturer:**	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed	**Engine Model/Series:**	HIO-360-D1A
Registered Owner:	NEO HELICOPTER ACADEMY LLC	**Rated Power:**	190 Horsepower
Operator:	NEO HELICOPTER ACADEMY LLC	**Operating Certificate(s) Held:**	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	**Condition of Light:**	Night
Observation Facility, Elevation:	AKR,1044 ft msl	**Distance from Accident Site:**	4 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	06:54 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	250°
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:	29.94 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	2°C / -2°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	WADSWORTH MUNI, OH (3G3)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	
Destination:	Ravenna, OH (POV)	**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:	06:45 Local	**Type of Airspace:**	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	**Latitude, Longitude:**	41.06071,-81.375438

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Mccarter, Lawrence
Additional Participating Persons:	Stevan Vilimonovic; FAA/FSDO; Cleveland, OH
Original Publish Date:	December 10, 2025
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=199857