



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Archer City, Texas	Accident Number:	CEN25LA396
Date & Time:	September 27, 2025, 12:30 Local	Registration:	N565VA
Aircraft:	Bell 206	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:	Low altitude operation/event	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot was attempting to herd livestock when the helicopter contacted a powerline which damaged the main rotor system and resulted in a loss of control. The helicopter crash-landed into a shallow ditch and came to rest on its right side. The pilot was able to egress with minor injuries before the helicopter was destroyed by a post-impact fire. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident 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 from power lines while herding livestock.

Findings

Environmental issues	Wire - Effect on equipment
Personnel issues	Monitoring environment - Pilot
Aircraft	Altitude - Not attained/maintained

Factual Information

History of Flight

Maneuvering-low-alt flying	Low altitude operation/event (Defining event)
Maneuvering	Loss of control in flight

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	70,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	BasicMed Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	January 5, 2023
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1094 hours (Total, all aircraft), 764 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Bell	Registration:	N565VA
Model/Series:	206 B3	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	1980	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	3107
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	5
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 17, 2025 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	13318 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Allison
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	250-C20
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	420 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KRPH, 1123 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	30 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:35 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	163°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots / None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	230°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	30°C / 12°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Archer City, TX	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Archer City, TX	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	33.592,-98.7308

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Maxon, Cory
Additional Participating Persons:	Corey Wehmeyer; FAA; Lubbock, TX
Original Publish Date:	January 15, 2026
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=201738

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](#).