



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	DeLand, Florida	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ERA25LA380
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	February 26, 2025, 13:00 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N849DB
<b>Aircraft:</b>	BELL HELICOPTER CORP UH-1D	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Loss of control in flight	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

Two pilots were attempting to reposition the vintage, experimental-exhibition category helicopter into a hangar to protect it from hail damage before a severe cold front arrived. The pilots initially attempted to land the helicopter on a movable skid, but because the skid was too close to a building (given the wind conditions), the pilots landed the helicopter before one of the pilots disembarked and moved the skid. The accident pilot then took off in the helicopter and flew in a roughly circular pattern to approach the skid for landing. During the flight the helicopter “developed a severe shake,” so the pilot decided to immediately land the helicopter on the grass below. During the landing, the helicopter’s tail rotor struck the ground, substantially damaging it and its mount/drive system. The pilot reported that there were no preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures of the helicopter that would have precluded normal operation. He further described that at the time of the accident the wind velocity was about 30 knots, and “I wish it had not been so windy, with the wind whipping around the building. If the skid had been in an area of clear air, it would have been fine.”

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

The pilot’s loss of helicopter control during landing approach in strong wind conditions, which resulted in tail rotor contact with the ground during landing.

## Findings

### Personnel issues

Aircraft control - Pilot

### Aircraft

Landing flare - Not attained/maintained

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

<b>Landing</b>	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)
<b>Approach</b>	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	63,Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Right
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	3-point
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	May 27, 2025
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	October 23, 2024
<b>Flight Time:</b>	(Estimated) 15000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 9 hours (Total, this make and model)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	BELL HELICOPTER CORP	<b>Registration:</b>	N849DB
<b>Model/Series:</b>	UH-1D	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Helicopter
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	1970	<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Experimental (Special)	<b>Serial Number:</b>	8494
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	None; Skid	<b>Seats:</b>	13
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	January 12, 2020 Condition	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	9000 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	13 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	10013 Hrs at time of accident	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	
<b>ELT:</b>	Not installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	On file	<b>Rated Power:</b>	
<b>Operator:</b>	On file	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	DED,79 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	1 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	13:15 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	32°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	6 knots / None	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	None / None
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	220°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	N/A / N/A
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	30.04 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	25°C / 9°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	DeLand, FL	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	DeLand, FL	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>		<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class D

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	DELAND MUNI-SIDNEY H TAYLOR FLD DED	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	79 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>		<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Full stop

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	29.058652,-81.288969(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Alleyne, Eric
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Brad Holland; FAA/FSDO; Orlando, FL
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	January 9, 2026
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class 4</a>
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=201916">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=201916</a>

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.

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