



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Mettler, California	Accident Number:	WPR26LA207
Date & Time:	June 1, 2026, 16:20 Local	Registration:	N88755
Aircraft:	Bell 47G-2	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Miscellaneous/other	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

The pilot landed the helicopter on an agricultural loading platform mounted on top a support truck to load spray material. After the loading operation was complete, the pilot signaled the ground crew member to stop pumping the spray material. The ground crewmember then approached the helicopter to speak with the pilot. After their brief conversation, the pilot initiated takeoff without verifying the loading hose had been disconnected from the helicopter's spray system.

Upon realizing the hose remained attached, the pilot attempted to maintain a hover above the truck while the ground crewmember disconnected the hose. The ground crewmember was able to disconnect the hose; however, the pilot lost control of the helicopter, and it impacted terrain adjacent to the loading truck. The helicopter sustained substantial damage to the fuselage, cabin, main rotor system, and tail rotor system.

The pilot reported 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 ensure the loading hose had been disconnected before takeoff, which resulted in an interrupted takeoff and subsequent loss of control. Contributing to the accident was the ground loader's failure to disconnect the hose before communicating with the pilot.

Findings

Personnel issues	Incorrect action selection - Pilot
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Aircraft	Directional control - Not attained/maintained
Aircraft	Hoses and tubes - Incorrect use/operation

Factual Information

History of Flight

Takeoff	Miscellaneous/other (Defining event)
Takeoff	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	45,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider; Helicopter	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Helicopter; Instrument airplane	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 10, 2026
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	February 27, 2026
Flight Time:	9200 hours (Total, all aircraft), 200 hours (Total, this make and model), 9000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 100 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 35 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Bell	Registration:	N88755
Model/Series:	47G-2	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	1959	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	2252
Landing Gear Type:	Tandem; High skid	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	March 27, 2026 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2450 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	49 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	7827.7 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	VO-435-A1F
Registered Owner:	OLD TIME AG AVIATION LLC	Rated Power:	260 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Agricultural aircraft (137)
Operator Does Business As:	Old Time Ag Aviation	Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	BFL, 490 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	22 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	15:00 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	357°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	50 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/ None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	29.65 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	33.3°C / 7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Mettler, CA	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Mettler, CA	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	15:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Farm field outside Mettler CA.	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	Dry;Vegetation
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	35.06,-119.03(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Beckett, Joel
Additional Participating Persons:	Michael McMillan; Federal Aviation Administration; Fresno, CA
Original Publish Date:	August 27, 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=203108

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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](#).