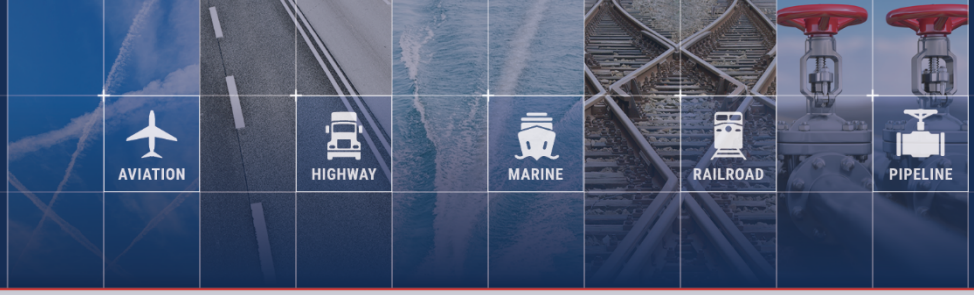

Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	McMinnville, Tennessee	**Accident Number:**	ERA26LA327
Date & Time:	September 3, 2026, 14:11 Local	**Registration:**	N276SH
Aircraft:	ROBINSON HELICOPTER R22 BETA	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:	Hard landing	**Injuries:**	1 Serious, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

Analysis

The flight instructor of the helicopter stated that after practicing two uneventful 180° practice auto rotations, the student pilot attempted a third. The maneuver proceeded as expected, however, as it progressed, the helicopter slowed significantly at low altitude. The flight instructor stated that he attempted to take the controls to recover, but he was too late and the helicopter landed hard in the grass prior to the runway. The helicopter rolled to the left and the fuselage, main rotors, and tail boom were substantially damaged. The flight instructor reported that there were no preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures of 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 flight instructor’s delayed remedial action during a practice autorotation, which resulted in a hard landing.

Findings

Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Instructor/check pilot
Aircraft	Landing flare - Not attained/maintained

Factual Information

History of Flight

Autorotation	Hard landing (Defining event)

Flight instructor Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	**Age:**	28,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	**Seat Occupied:**	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	**Restraint Used:**	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter	**Second Pilot Present:**	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine; Helicopter; Instrument airplane; Instrument helicopter	**Toxicology Performed:**	
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Without waivers/limitations	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	January 20, 2026
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	March 31, 2025
Flight Time:	1579 hours (Total, all aircraft), 477.8 hours (Total, this make and model), 1459.5 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 51.9 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 8.5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4.4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	**Age:**	33,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	**Seat Occupied:**	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	**Restraint Used:**	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Helicopter	**Second Pilot Present:**	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	**Toxicology Performed:**	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	June 14, 2026
Occupational Pilot:	No	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	August 6, 2026
Flight Time:	292.8 hours (Total, all aircraft), 62 hours (Total, this make and model), 178.8 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 18.6 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 12.4 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3.2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	ROBINSON HELICOPTER	**Registration:**	N276SH
Model/Series:	R22 BETA	**Aircraft Category:**	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	2007	**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	**Serial Number:**	4246
Landing Gear Type:	None; Skid	**Seats:**	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	November 18, 2025 Annual	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	1370 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	66.4 Hrs	**Engines:**	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	6310.2 Hrs at time of accident	**Engine Manufacturer:**	Lycoming Engines
ELT:	Not installed	**Engine Model/Series:**	O-360-J2A
Registered Owner:	SPITZER HELICOPTER LLC	**Rated Power:**	145 Horsepower
Operator:	Adam Cobrinik	**Operating Certificate(s) Held:**	None
Operator Does Business As:	Whirlybird22 LLC	**Operator Designator Code:**	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	**Condition of Light:**	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	CSV,1870 ft msl	**Distance from Accident Site:**	40 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	14:00 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	68°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 6500 ft AGL	**Visibility**	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/ None	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	None / None
Wind Direction:		**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.11 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	34°C / 18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	McMinnville, TN	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	None
Destination:	Nashville, TN (JWN)	**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:		**Type of Airspace:**	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	WARREN COUNTY MEML RNC	**Runway Surface Type:**	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	1031 ft msl	**Runway Surface Condition:**	Dry;Rough;Vegetation
Runway Used:	05	**IFR Approach:**	None
Runway Length/Width:	5000 ft / 100 ft	**VFR Approach/Landing:**	Simulated forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 None	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:		**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 None	**Latitude, Longitude:**	35.694218,-85.850559(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Enders, Ryan
Additional Participating Persons:	David Clouse; FAA/FSDO; Nashville, TN
Original Publish Date:	October 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.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=203731

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.