

 National Transportation Safety Board <b>FACTUAL REPORT</b> AVIATION		NTSB ID: SEA07LA021		Aircraft Registration Number: N500FU	
		Occurrence Date: 11/21/2006		Most Critical Injury: Fatal	
		Occurrence Type: Accident		Investigated By: NTSB	
Location/Time					
Nearest City/Place Jensen		State UT	Zip Code 84035	Local Time 1250	Time Zone MST
Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip		Distance From Landing Facility:			
Aircraft Information Summary					
Aircraft Manufacturer Hughes		Model/Series 369E		Type of Aircraft Helicopter	
Revenue Sightseeing Flight: No			Air Medical Transport Flight: No		
Narrative					
<p>Brief narrative statement of facts, conditions and circumstances pertinent to the accident/incident:</p> <p>*** Note: NTSB investigators may not have traveled in support of this investigation and used data provided by various sources to prepare this aircraft accident report. ***</p> <p>On November 21, 2006, approximately 1250 mountain standard time, a Hughes 369E helicopter, N500FU, sustained substantial damage following a collision with transmission wires and subsequent impact with terrain while maneuvering near Jensen, Utah. The helicopter was registered to and operated by Pete Martin Drilling of Vernal, Utah. The commercial pilot sustained serious injuries, while his sole passenger received fatal injuries. The search and rescue flight was being conducted in accordance with 14 CFR Part 91, and a company visual flight rules (VFR) flight plan was filed. The helicopter departed the Vernal Airport, Vernal, Utah, at 1230.</p> <p>In a written statement provided by the pilot and in a telephone interview with the NTSB investigator-in-charge (IIC), the pilot reported that he departed the Vernal Airport for the Jensen Bridge (the section of Highway 40 which crosses the Green River) on a search and rescue mission for a missing woman; the pilot occupied the left front seat and a local deputy sheriff occupied the right front seat. The pilot stated that after reaching the search area the deputy instructed him to begin the search mode by making left hand circular patterns. The pilot further stated, "I began to descend and slow the aircraft down at this particular time. I made approximately two 360-degree orbits to the left, when suddenly multiple strands of power lines came in contact with the aircraft. The next thing I can recall after making contact with the lines, I was trapped in the water surrounded by power lines and aircraft wreckage." The pilot stated that he never saw the transmission wires and was not aware that they were in the area. The pilot also related that there were no anomalies with the helicopter prior to the flight. (Refer to the area map of the accident site, which is appended to the factual report.)</p> <p>A Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) aviation safety inspector, who traveled to the accident site, reported that the helicopter impacted terrain at Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates 40 degrees 21.630 minutes north latitude and 109 degrees 20.185 minutes west longitude, at an elevation of 4,750 feet mean sea level, which is approximately 3,500 feet south of Highway 40. The helicopter subsequently rolled down an incline in a westerly direction over a distance of approximately 150 feet before coming to rest about 20 feet from the east bank of the Green River. The aircraft was facing west on its right side, with half of the helicopter submerged in the water. The inspector estimated that between 10 to 15 feet of wire cable had become entangled around the main rotor shaft. The inspector's assessment of the wreckage included the tail boom being separated, the left skid remaining attached to the helicopter, while the right skid was separated from the aircraft. The main rotor blades (5) were separated at their respective hubs and the tail rotor blades remained attached to the tail rotor assembly, with the exception of about 3 inches off of each tip. The cabin/cockpit bubble was cut off, the center console remained intact, and both cockpit seats remained intact, with the right seat pushed aft.</p> <p>Local law enforcement personnel provided the IIC with witness statements from three witnesses who observed the accident.</p>					
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## Narrative (Continued)

Witness #1 reported seeing the helicopter go overhead, turn around by the [Jensen] Bridge, and came back overhead again before clipping the power lines prior to "...parts flying off and the body of the chopper hitting the water." Witness #2 stated that he was walking south of the Jensen Bridge when the helicopter came up behind him on his right side. The witness reported, "I look[ed] up just as it got in to the power lines. The chopper looked like it exploded in the air and then land[ed] in the water." Witness #3 stated, "I was on the east side of the red wash road on a ridge on a 4-wheeler. I saw the chopper circle around a small ridge and over the river then flip over, then heard the bang."

At 1253, the weather reporting facility at the Vernal Airport, located approximately 10 nautical miles northwest of the accident site, reported wind calm, visibility 10 statute miles, sky clear, temperature 8 degrees C, dew point -2 degrees C, and an altimeter setting of 30.22 inches of Mercury.

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<b>Landing Facility/Approach Information</b>					
Airport Name	Airport ID:	Airport Elevation Ft. MSL	Runway Used NA	Runway Length	Runway Width
Runway Surface Type:					
Runway Surface Condition:					
Approach/Arrival Flown: NONE					
VFR Approach/Landing: None					
<b>Aircraft Information</b>					
Aircraft Manufacturer Hughes		Model/Series 369E		Serial Number 199E	
Airworthiness Certificate(s): Normal					
Landing Gear Type: High Skid					
Amateur Built Acft? No	Number of Seats: 4	Certified Max Gross Wt. 3000 LBS		Number of Engines: 1	
Engine Type: Turbo Shaft		Engine Manufacturer: Rolls-Royce		Model/Series: 250-C20B	
				Rated Power: 420 HP	
- Aircraft Inspection Information					
Type of Last Inspection 100 Hour		Date of Last Inspection 10/2006	Time Since Last Inspection Hours		Airframe Total Time 6843.9 Hours
- Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) Information					
ELT Installed?/Type Yes /		ELT Operated? No	ELT Aided in Locating Accident Site? No		
<b>Owner/Operator Information</b>					
Registered Aircraft Owner Pete Martin Drilling		Street Address			
		City Vernal		State UT	Zip Code 84078
Operator of Aircraft Pete Martin Drilling		Street Address			
		City Vernal		State UT	Zip Code 84078
Operator Does Business As:			Operator Designator Code:		
- Type of U.S. Certificate(s) Held: None					
Air Carrier Operating Certificate(s):					
Operating Certificate:			Operator Certificate:		
Regulation Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation					
Type of Flight Operation Conducted: Other Work Use					

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**First Pilot Information**

Name On File	City On File	State On File	Date of Birth On File	Age 38
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Sex: M	Seat Occupied: Left	Occupational Pilot?	Certificate Number: On File
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Certificate(s): Flight Instructor; Commercial

Airplane Rating(s): Single-engine Land

Rotorcraft/Glider/LTA: Helicopter

Instrument Rating(s): Airplane; Helicopter

Instructor Rating(s): Helicopter

Current Biennial Flight Review? 05/2006

Medical Cert.: Class 2	Medical Cert. Status: With Waivers/Limitations	Date of Last Medical Exam: 06/2006
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- Flight Time Matrix	All A/C	This Make and Model	Airplane Single Engine	Airplane Multi-Engine	Night	Instrument		Rotorcraft	Glider	Lighter Than Air
						Actual	Simulated			
Total Time	7770	3000	850	11	898	2	224	6856	18	
Pilot In Command(PIC)	6335	3000	800	11	898	2	224	6856	18	
Instructor	931	500			898			931		
Instruction Received										
Last 90 Days	150	150			10			10		
Last 30 Days	50	50			10			50		
Last 24 Hours										

Seatbelt Used? Yes	Shoulder Harness Used? Yes	Toxicology Performed? No	Second Pilot? No
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**Flight Plan/Itinerary**

Type of Flight Plan Filed: Company VFR

Departure Point Vernal	State UT	Airport Identifier VEL	Departure Time 1200	Time Zone MST
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Destination Jensen	State UT	Airport Identifier	
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Type of Clearance: None

Type of Airspace:

**Weather Information**

Source of Wx Information:

National Weather Service

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**Weather Information**

WOF ID	Observation Time	Time Zone	WOF Elevation	WOF Distance From Accident Site	Direction From Accident Site
VEL	1250	MST	5278 Ft. MSL	10 NM	290 Deg. Mag.
Sky/Lowest Cloud Condition: Clear			Ft. AGL	Condition of Light: Day	
Lowest Ceiling: None			Ft. AGL	Visibility: 10 SM	Altimeter: 30.22 "Hg
Temperature: 8 °C	Dew Point: -2 °C	Weather Conditions at Accident Site: Visual Conditions			
Wind Direction:	Wind Speed: Calm		Wind Gusts:		
Visibility (RVR): Ft.	Visibility (RVV) SM				
Precip and/or Obscuration: No Obscuration; No Precipitation					

**Accident Information**

Aircraft Damage: Substantial	Aircraft Fire: None	Aircraft Explosion: None
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- Injury Summary Matrix	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	TOTAL
First Pilot		1			1
Second Pilot					
Student Pilot					
Flight Instructor					
Check Pilot					
Flight Engineer					
Cabin Attendants					
Other Crew					
Passengers	1				1
- TOTAL ABOARD -	1	1			2
Other Ground					
- GRAND TOTAL -	1	1			2

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Administrative Information

Investigator-In-Charge (IIC)

Thomas M. Little

Additional Persons Participating in This Accident/Incident Investigation:

Eric McRae  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Salt Lake City, UT