
 <b>National Transportation Safety Board</b> <b>PRELIMINARY REPORT</b> <b>AVIATION</b>		NTSB ID: CEN09MA117		Most Critical Injury:					
		Occurrence Date: 01/04/2009		Investigated By: NTSB					
		Occurrence Type: Accident							
Location/Time									
Nearest City/Place		State	Zip Code	Local Time	Time Zone				
Morgan City		LA	70680	1409	CST				
Aircraft Information									
Registration Number		Aircraft Manufacturer		Model/Series Number					
N748P		SIKORSKY		S-76C++					
Type of Aircraft: Helicopter			Amateur Built Aircraft? No						
Injury Summary:		Fatal	2	Serious	1	Minor	6	None	6
Revenue Sightseeing Flight: No				Air Medical Transport Flight: No					
Narrative									
Brief narrative statement of facts, conditions and circumstances pertinent to the accident/incident:									
<p>On January 4, 2008, at 1409 Central Standard Time (CST), a Sikorsky S-76C++ helicopter, N748P, registered to and operated by Petroleum Helicopters, Inc.(PHI), as a CFR 49 Part 135 air taxi flight using day visual flight rules (VFR), crashed into marshy terrain approximately 7 minutes after take-off and 12 miles southeast of the departure heliport. Both pilots and six of the seven passengers on board were killed. One person was critically injured. The helicopter departed Lake Palourde Base Heliport, a PHI base (7LS3), in Amelia, Louisiana, en route to the South Timbalier oil platform ST301B to transport workers from two different oil exploration companies. No flight plan was filed with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), nor was one required. A company flight plan was filed with the PHI communications center that provided weather updates and flight following for the helicopter crew.</p> <p>According to representatives of PHI, the flight was being tracked via Outerlink, a satellite based fleet-tracking system used by the PHI communications center. The departure from 7LS3 was reported at 1402. The track suddenly ended about 7 minutes after departure at 1409. There were no reports of any problems from the flight crew on the PHI radio frequencies or emergency transmissions on any monitored air traffic control frequencies. A search and rescue operation was initiated at 1414 after the US Air Force notified PHI and the United States Coast Guard of a distress signal being transmitted with the unique identifier that is part of the Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) signal that transmits the Aircraft registration number and latitude and longitude coordinates. The helicopter wreckage was found shortly thereafter near the location of the loss of the track and transmitted ELT signal location by the U.S. Coast Guard. The wreckage was found partially submerged and exhibited very little main rotor blade damage.</p> <p>The twin-engine, 14-seat, 2-year-old helicopter was equipped with glass cockpit instrumentation, a combination cockpit voice recorder (CVR) and flight data recorder (FDR), an enhanced ground proximity warning system (EGPWS), solid state quick access recorder (SSQAR), and a VXP vibration recorder. The two Turbomeca Ariel turbo shaft engines were equipped with digital engine control units (DECU). All of these devices have been recovered and are being evaluated by the NTSB IIC and the investigative team. Additional electronic components and flight components are scheduled for further detailed examination. The wreckage was recovered to the PHI maintenance facility in Lafayette, Louisiana and secured.</p> <p>The weather conditions reported at Amelia, Louisiana at 1430 CST were; scattered cloud layers at 1,500 feet and 3,500 feet, a broken cloud layer at 10,000 feet, visibility 10 miles, winds at 160 degrees at 6 knots, temperature of 24 degrees Celsius, and dew point of 19 degrees Celsius.</p>									
PRELIMINARY INFORMATION - SUBJECT TO CHANGE									
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Other Aircraft Involved		
Registration Number	Aircraft Manufacturer	Model/Series Number

Accident Information	
Aircraft Damage: Destroyed	Accident Occurred During:

Crew	Name	Certificate No.	Injury
Pilot	On File	On File	Fatal
2	On File	On File	Fatal
3			
4			
5			
6			

Operator Information		
Name PHI INC	Operator Designator Code	Doing Business As

Street Address 2001 SE EVANGELINE TRWY	City LAFAYETTE	State LA	Zip Code 70508-2156
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-Type of Certificate(s) Held:
Air Carrier Operating Certificate(s): On-demand Air Taxi

Operating Certificate:	Operator Certificate:
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Regulation Flight Conducted Under: Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter
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Type of Flight Operations Conducted: Non-scheduled; Domestic; Passenger Only
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Flight Plan/Itinerary	
Type of Flight Plan Filed: Company VFR	

Last Departure Point	State	Airport Identifier
Amelia	LA	7LS3
Destination	State	Airport Identifier
Tambelier 301B	GM	301B

Weather Information		
Investigator's Source: Automated Report	Facility ID: 7R3	Observation Time (Local): 1430
Sky/Lowest Cloud Condition: Scattered	1500 Ft. AGL	
Lowest Ceiling: Broken	10000 Ft. AGL	Visibility: 10 SM
	Altimeter: 30.03	"Hg

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**Weather Information** (Continued from page 2)

Temperature: 24 °C	Dew Point: 19 °C	Wind Direction: 160	
Wind Speed: 6 Kts.	Gusts: Kts.	Weather Conditions at Accident Site: Visual Conditions	

**Administration Data**

Notification From Regional Operations Center, FT	Date
FAA District Office/Coordinator Federal Aviation Administration Wibur D. Keith	Investigator-In-Charge (IIC) William H. Gamble