
 National Transportation Safety Board PRELIMINARY REPORT AVIATION		NTSB ID: LAX08PA259		Most Critical Injury: Fatal	
		Occurrence Date: 08/05/2008		Investigated By: NTSB	
		Occurrence Type: Accident		ICAO Report Submitted:	
Location/Time					
Nearest City/Place		State	Zip Code	Local Time	Time Zone
Redding		CA	96001	1941	PDT
Aircraft Information					
Registration Number		Aircraft Manufacturer		Model/Series Number	
N612AZ		Sikorsky		S-61N	
Type of Aircraft: Helicopter			Homebuilt Aircraft? No		
Injury Summary:		Fatal	9	Serious	4
				Minor	None
Sightseeing Flight: No			Air Medical Transport Flight: No		
Narrative					
Brief narrative statement of facts, conditions and circumstances pertinent to the accident/incident:					
<p>On August 5, 2008, at 1941 Pacific daylight time, a Sikorsky, S-61N helicopter, N612AZ, experienced a loss of power to the main rotor during takeoff initial climb, and subsequently impacted trees and terrain near Redding, California. Postimpact fire destroyed the helicopter. The airline transport pilot and 8 passengers were fatally injured, and the commercial copilot and 3 passengers were seriously injured. The helicopter was being operated under contract to the United States Forest Service by Carson Helicopter Services, Inc., as a public-use flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the cross-country flight that was originating at the time of the accident. A company visual flight rules (VFR) flight plan had been filed. The helicopter was departing from Helispot 44 (H-44, elevation 5,935 feet) en route to Helispot 36 (H-36, elevation 2,516 feet) when the accident occurred.</p> <p>The helicopter had been assigned to transport approximately 50 wildland firefighter helitack crewmembers out of the Trinity Alps Wilderness of the Shasta Trinity National Forest due to forecasted worsening weather conditions. The helicopter had completed two trips, and had gone to Trinity Helibase to refuel. After it had refueled, it returned to H-44 for its third load of passengers. During departure, the helicopter impacted trees and subsequently terrain, coming to rest on its left side. A postcrash fire consumed the aircraft.</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: Takeoff - initial climb

Property Damage:

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

Operator Information		
Name USDA Forest Service	Operator Designator Code	Doing Business As

Street Address	City Boise	State ID	Zip Code 83705
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-Type of Certificate(s) Held: None

Air Carrier Operating Certificate(s):

Operating Certificate:	Operator Certificate:
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Regulation Flight Conducted Under: Public Use

Type of Flight Operations Conducted: Public Use - Federal

Flight Plan/Itinerary

Type of Flight Plan Filed: Company VFR
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Last Departure Point	State	Airport Identifier
Same as Accident/Incident Location		NONE
Destination	State	Airport Identifier
Local Flight		NONE

Weather Information

Investigator's Source:	Facility ID: RDD	Observation Time (Local): 1953
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Sky/Lowest Cloud Condition: Thin Broken	1700 Ft. AGL
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Lowest Ceiling: None	Ft. AGL	Visibility: 10	SM	Altimeter: 29.83	"Hg
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Weather Information (Continued from page 2)

Temperature: 33 °C	Dew Point: 2 °C	Wind Direction: 150	
Wind Speed: 7 Kts.	Gusts: Kts.	Weather Conditions at Accident Site: Visual Conditions	

Administration Data

Notification From WP FAA ROC	Date 08/05/2008	Local Time
FAA District Office/Coordinator Washington, D.C., AAI-100 Tony James	Investigator-In-Charge (IIC) James F. Struhsaker	