

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
Vehicle Recorder Division
Washington, DC 20594

May 11, 2016

On Board Image Recorder

Specialist's Summary Report
By George Haralampopoulos

1. EVENT

Location:	La Junta, Colorado
Date:	May 7, 2013
Aircraft:	Bell 206-L1, N20Z
Operator:	Corporate Aircraft Services
NTSB Number:	CEN13LA310

2. GROUP

A group was not convened.

3. SUMMARY

On May 7, 2013, about 1249 mountain daylight time, a Bell model 206L-1 helicopter, N20Z, sustained substantial damage when it impacted the ground near La Junta, Colorado, following an in-flight loss of tail rotor control. The pilot and two passengers were not injured. The helicopter's tail boom was separated and it sustained additional damage to the fuselage and main rotor system. The aircraft was registered to Helicopters Inc. and operated by Corporate Aircraft Services under the provisions of 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 as an aerial observation flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the flight, which was not operated on a flight plan. The local flight originated from the La Junta Municipal Airport (LHX), La Junta, Colorado.

4. DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION

The NTSB Vehicle Recorder Division's Laboratory received a DVD containing a (.MTS) video file from the event flight.¹

¹ MTS is a file extension for an Advanced Video Coding High Definition (AVCHD) video clip format.

4.1. Video File

The video file was 14 minutes and 15 seconds in length. According to the pilot, the video file was created with a Sony HDR-CX760V camera that was GPS enabled. Inspection of the file's metadata yielded a GPS track of the accident flight.²

4.2. Timing and Correlation

Timing of the video was established by using the GPS time in UTC, from the file's metadata. The beginning of the video occurred at 1734:55 UTC. All times are referenced in UTC for the rest of this report. An additional offset of 6 hours can be subtracted from UTC to obtain local time, mountain daylight time (MDT).

4.3. Summary of Recorded Contents

In agreement with the Investigator-In-Charge, a group did not convene and a summary report was prepared.

According to the pilot, the camera operator was holding the camera outside of the helicopter through the small window on the left front door of the helicopter. Therefore, the camera was free to rotate in all axes.

The video began in the air and the audio predominantly consists of aircraft rotor and engine sounds.

For the majority of the video, the aircraft conducted a series of ground observations through various terrains. The flight appeared uneventful until 1748:28 UTC, when audible noise consistent with wind was recorded and the camera appeared to jerk slightly at the onset of the noise. The sound of wind intensified at 1748:33 UTC, and continued intermittently until 1748:49 UTC, when the aircraft began an increasing yaw to right. At 1748:54 UTC the aircraft's yaw continued to increase and the camera operator retracted the camera into the cockpit. About a second later, the camera captured a view that showed the aircraft inverted. The aircraft continued to descend and impacted the ground at a 1748:57 UTC.

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² The GPS data can be found in the docket under "GPS Data Device Factual Report"