

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
Vehicle Recorder Division
Washington, DC 20594

March 7, 2017

Onboard Image Recorder

Specialist's Factual Report
By James Cash

1. EVENT

Location:	San Pedro California
Date:	01/04/2017
Aircraft:	Robinson R22, N702JJ
Operator:	JJ Helicopters
NTSB Number:	WPR17FA047

2. GROUP

A group was not convened.

3. SUMMARY

On January 4, 2017, about 1735 Pacific Standard Time, a Robinson R22, N702JJ, collided with the water near San Pedro, California. JJ Helicopters was operating the helicopter under the provisions of Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 91. The commercial pilot and one passenger sustained fatal injuries. The helicopter sustained substantial damage during the accident sequence. The local photography flight departed Torrance Municipal Airport, Torrance, California, about 1635 PST. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan had been filed.

4. DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION

On January 17 2017, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Vehicle Recorder Division received the following handheld camera without a lens attached:

Camera Manufacturer/Model:	Nikon D5
Camera Serial Number:	3500360

4.1. Recorder Description

The Nikon D5 camera is a professional digital single lens reflex (DSLR) handheld camera. The camera is capable of taking both high quality still and video photographs at very high resolution. The accident camera was equipped with two

compact flash (CF) memory cards. One card was a 64 GB memory card and the other card was a 32 GB memory card. No lens was sent with the camera body.

4.2. Recorder Damage

The camera was shipped to the NTSB Laboratory submerged in a plastic 5-gallon pail of fresh water. The camera was rinsed with fresh and de-ionized water after arrival. The two memory cards were extracted from the main camera body. The memory cards were disassembled from their metal outer cases and were flushed with fresh water and denatured alcohol. Both cards were dried and reassembled into their normal exterior cases for readout. Both memory cards operated normally and the files that they contained were copied to the laboratory's computer for examination.

4.3. Files Recovered

The 64 GB memory card contained approximately 1900 Nikon formatted still aerial pictures, mostly of the Los Angeles harbor and several cruise ships that were in the harbor area. The first image recorded was of another helicopter located on a runway ramp in late afternoon/twilight light conditions. The date and time associated with the photograph was January 4, 2017 at 5:38¹ PM. The last photograph was an aerial shot of a cruise ship leaving the harbor area. According to the data associated with the picture, it was taken on the day of the accident at 6:44 PM in almost dark light conditions. All of the recovered pictures were taken prior to the estimated time of the accident and did not provide any information pertaining to the helicopter accident. There were no video files recovered from the memory card.

The 32 GB memory card was blank and did not contain any recorded image files.

¹ All times noted are referenced to the time that was set in the camera. Due to the destruction of the camera, the accuracy of this time could not be verified.