



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Western Pacific Region

June 18, 2019

ACCIDENT SITE EXAMINATION SUMMARY

WPR19FA175

This document contains 5 embedded images.

A. ACCIDENT

Location: Santa Catalina Island, CA
Date: June 17, 2019
Aircraft: Robinson R44, N7187D
NTSB Investigator-in-Charge: Maja Smith

B. SUMMARY

Examination of the accident site was conducted on June 18, 2019. All major structural components of the airplane were located at the accident site. The wreckage was recovered to a secure location for further examination.

C. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

1.0 Accident Site Examination

Main Wreckage: 33°27.7698'N, 118°34.4792'W– Elevation: 1293 feet

The accident site was located in the mountainous terrain of Santa Catalina Island, California. Catalina Island is an island off the coast of California, about 29 miles south-southwest of Long Beach, CA.

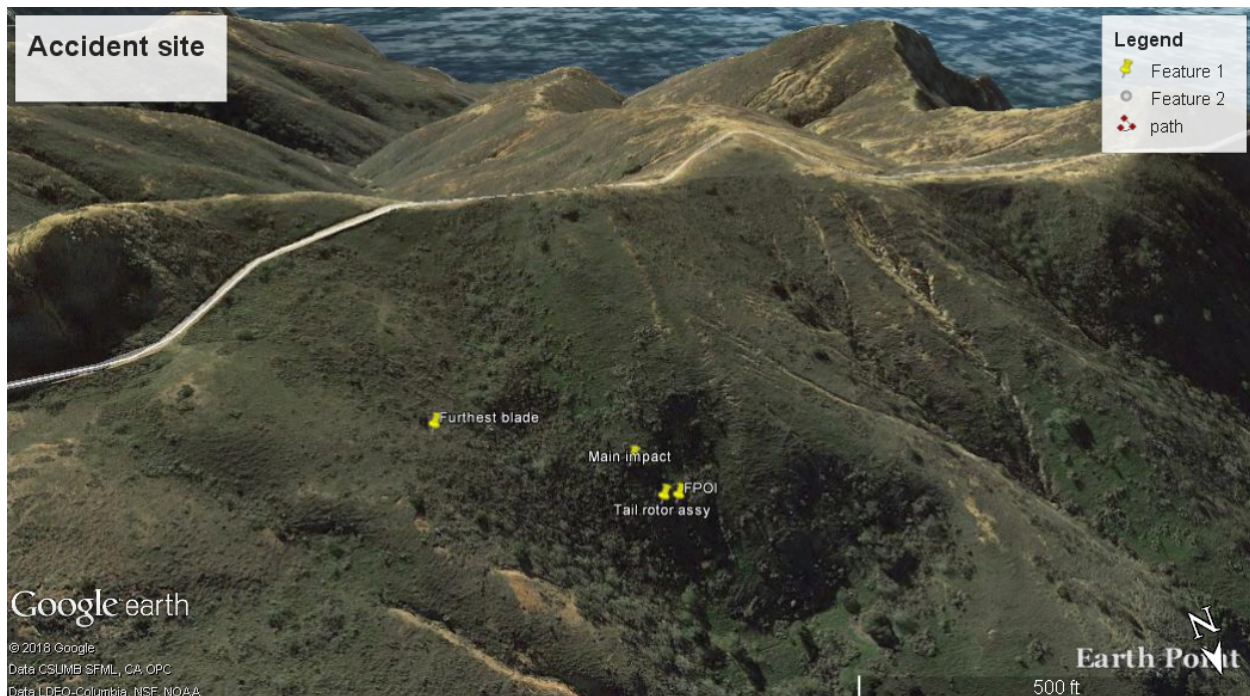


Figure 1. Accident location



Figure 2. Aerial photo of the wreckage

The helicopter impacted mountainous terrain about 2 miles south-east of the most northern tip of the island. It came to rest about 860 feet north of the east-west oriented ridgeline bordered by vegetation that primarily consisted of shrubbery. The elevation at the main wreckage was about 1293 feet msl. The wreckage path proceeded downhill along a heading of about 325° magnetic and was about 70 ft long. All major components of the helicopter were located at the accident site. The wreckage was significantly fragmented and consumed by a postcrash fire. Continuity from the controls to the main and tail rotor systems could not be confirmed due to impact and fire damage, however, all control rod ends were found in the wreckage path.



Figure 3. First point of impact

The first identified points of contact (FPOI) consisted of disrupted dirt on the far northern end of the debris field, about 70 feet from the main wreckage. Two additional markings created nearly parallel indentations in the vegetation and dirt spaced a foot apart. Those markings were consistent with both main rotor blades contacting terrain while still rotating.

The vertical fin and horizontal stabilizer on the were located about 20 feet to the left of FPOI and were impact damaged. The TR gearbox was separated from the tailboom and one TR blade remained attached to the gearbox. The other TR blade was separated and located nearby.

The main wreckage consisted of the remnants of fuselage, the tailboom, the engine and the main rotor (MR) blade assembly. Both MR blades were separated from the mast; outboard portion of one MR blade was located at the adjacent hill about 240ft east of the main wreckage.



Figure 4. View from the main wreckage towards the outboard piece of a main rotor blade



Figure 5. Outboard piece of a main rotor blade