	NTSB ID: FTW99LA083	Aircraft Registration Number: N971SL
	Occurrence Date: 02/17/1999	Most Critical Injury: None
	Occurrence Type: Accident	Investigated By: NTSB

Location/Time

Nearest City/Place FREER	State TX	Zip Code 78357	Local Time 0900	Time Zone CST	
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Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip	Distance From Landing Facility:
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Aircraft Information Summary

Aircraft Manufacturer Robinson	Model/Series R22-B2 /R22-B2	Type of Aircraft Helicopter
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Revenue Sightseeing Flight: No

Air Medical Transport Flight: No

Narrative

Brief narrative statement of facts, conditions and circumstances pertinent to the accident/incident:

On February 17, 1999, at 0900 central standard time, a Robinson R22-B2 helicopter, N971SL, was substantially damaged when it impacted terrain following a loss of control while hovering near Freer, Texas. The non-instrument rated commercial pilot and his passenger were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a flight plan was not filed for the Title 14 CFR Part 91 business flight which originated from a private ranch. The helicopter was owned and operated by Smith Helicopters Inc., of Laredo, Texas.


According to the operator of the helicopter, a rancher hired the pilot and a trapper to "net some deer on his ranch for relocation." The trapper used a three foot, 18 pound "net gun" which fires a net on to the animal to trap it so that ground personnel can load the animal into a truck for relocation.


The pilot stated that the trapper missed a deer with the net and was reloading the net gun while the pilot hovered 20 feet over the deer. The pilot verified that the trapper was ready and started to descend. As the helicopter was descending the pilot noticed the helicopter started rolling to the left. The pilot looked toward the trapper and noticed that the "gun was hooked on the T-bar which connects the two cyclic controls." Consequently, the cyclic control was forced to the "full left" position. The pilot told the passenger to unhook his gun; however, the helicopter impacted the ground on its left side before the pilot could regain control.

An FAA inspector examined the helicopter at the site and stated that the tail rotor drive shaft had separated, the main rotor assembly sustained structural damage and that a skid separated from the helicopter.

According to the pilot, he had approximately 3 years experience with this type of operation. The pilot estimated that he had accumulated 2,494 total helicopter flight hours, of which 681 hours were in the same make and model as the accident aircraft.

The pilot stated that the gunner had many hours experience in the same operation and the gunner was well briefed on the operations of the helicopter.

 National Transportation Safety Board FACTUAL REPORT AVIATION		NTSB ID: FTW99LA083			
		Occurrence Date: 02/17/1999			
		Occurrence Type: Accident			
Landing Facility/Approach Information					
Airport Name	Airport ID:	Airport Elevation Ft. MSL	Runway Used 0	Runway Length	Runway Width
Runway Surface Type:					
Runway Surface Condition:					
Approach/Arrival Flown: NONE					
VFR Approach/Landing: Forced Landing					
Aircraft Information					
Aircraft Manufacturer Robinson		Model/Series R22-B2 /R22-B2		Serial Number 2750	
Airworthiness Certificate(s): Normal					
Landing Gear Type: Skid					
Amateur Built Acft? No	Number of Seats: 2	Certified Max Gross Wt. 2350 LBS		Number of Engines: 1	
Engine Type: Reciprocating		Engine Manufacturer: Lycoming		Model/Series: O-360-AID	
				Rated Power: 180 HP	
- Aircraft Inspection Information					
Type of Last Inspection Annual		Date of Last Inspection	Time Since Last Inspection Hours	Airframe Total Time Hours	
- Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) Information					
ELT Installed?/Type		ELT Operated?	ELT Aided in Locating Accident Site?		
Owner/Operator Information					
Registered Aircraft Owner SMITH HELICOPTERS INC.		Street Address 8501 ALTA MIRA			
		City LAREDO	State TX	Zip Code 78045	
Operator of Aircraft SMITH HELICOPTERS INC.		Street Address 8501 ALTA MIRA			
		City LAREDO	State TX	Zip Code 78045	
Operator Does Business As:			Operator Designator Code:		
- Type of U.S. Certificate(s) Held: None					
Air Carrier Operating Certificate(s):					
Operating Certificate:			Operator Certificate:		
Regulation Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation					
Type of Flight Operation Conducted: Business					

 <p>National Transportation Safety Board FACTUAL REPORT AVIATION</p>	NTSB ID: FTW99LA083
	Occurrence Date: 02/17/1999
	Occurrence Type: Accident

First Pilot Information

Name On File	City On File	State On File	Date of Birth On File	Age 26
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Sex: M	Seat Occupied: Right	Occupational Pilot? Civilian Pilot	Certificate Number: On File
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Certificate(s): Commercial

Airplane Rating(s): None

Rotorcraft/Glider/LTA: Helicopter

Instrument Rating(s): None

Instructor Rating(s): None

Current Biennial Flight Review?

Medical Cert.: Class 2	Medical Cert. Status: Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Date of Last Medical Exam: 06/1998
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- Flight Time Matrix	All A/C	This Make and Model	Airplane Single Engine	Airplane Multi-Engine	Night	Instrument		Rotorcraft	Glider	Lighter Than Air
						Actual	Simulated			
Total Time	2494	681						2494		
Pilot In Command(PIC)	2425	670						2425		
Instructor										
Instruction Received										
Last 90 Days	190	190						190		
Last 30 Days	82	82						82		
Last 24 Hours	2	2						2		

Seatbelt Used? Yes	Shoulder Harness Used? Yes	Toxicology Performed? No	Second Pilot? No
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Flight Plan/Itinerary

Type of Flight Plan Filed: None

Departure Point PRIVATE RANCH	State TX	Airport Identifier NONE	Departure Time 0000	Time Zone
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Destination Local Flight	State	Airport Identifier	
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Type of Clearance: None

Type of Airspace: Class G

Weather Information

Source of Wx Information:

No record of briefing

 <p>National Transportation Safety Board FACTUAL REPORT AVIATION</p>	NTSB ID: FTW99LA083
	Occurrence Date: 02/17/1999
	Occurrence Type: Accident

Weather Information

WOF ID	Observation Time	Time Zone	WOF Elevation	WOF Distance From Accident Site	Direction From Accident Site
	0000		0 Ft. MSL	0 NM	0 Deg. Mag.
Sky/Lowest Cloud Condition: Clear			0 Ft. AGL	Condition of Light: Day	
Lowest Ceiling: None			0 Ft. AGL	Visibility: 6 SM	Altimeter: "Hg
Temperature: 27 °C	Dew Point: °C	Weather Conditions at Accident Site: Visual Conditions			
Wind Direction: 180	Wind Speed: Light and Variable		Wind Gusts:		
Visibility (RVR): 0 Ft.	Visibility (RVV) 0 SM				
Precip and/or Obscuration:					

Accident Information

Aircraft Damage: Substantial	Aircraft Fire: None	Aircraft Explosion: None
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- Injury Summary Matrix	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	TOTAL
First Pilot				1	1
Second Pilot					
Student Pilot					
Flight Instructor					
Check Pilot					
Flight Engineer					
Cabin Attendants					
Other Crew					
Passengers				1	1
- TOTAL ABOARD -				2	2
Other Ground	0	0	0		0
- GRAND TOTAL -	0	0	0	2	2

National Transportation Safety Board

FACTUAL REPORT

AVIATION



NTSB ID: FTW99LA083

Occurrence Date: 02/17/1999

Occurrence Type: Accident

Administrative Information

Investigator-In-Charge (IIC)

NICOLE LUPINO

Additional Persons Participating in This Accident/Incident Investigation:

BOB DOWNING
SAN ANTONIO, TX