

**From:** NTSB AVIATION LIST [mailto:AVIATION@LISTSERV.NTSB.GOV] **On Behalf Of** NTSB Press Releases  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 13, 2009 1:10 PM  
**To:** AVIATION@LISTSERV.NTSB.GOV  
**Subject:** NTSB TO RELEASE PUBLIC DOCKETS ON NINE FATAL HELICOPTER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (HEMS) ACCIDENTS; FOUR OF THEM CONTAIN A PROBABLE CAUSE

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NTSB ADVISORY  
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National Transportation Safety Board  
Washington, DC 20594

January 13, 2009

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NTSB TO RELEASE PUBLIC DOCKETS ON NINE FATAL HELICOPTER  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (HEMS) ACCIDENTS; FOUR OF THEM  
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As part of its continuing investigations into nine helicopter emergency medical services (HEMS) accidents the National Transportation Safety Board will open public dockets on Thursday, January 15, 2009, at 10:00 am. The nine docket items are:

\* On December 3, 2007, a Eurocopter BK117C1 helicopter, N141LG, crashed into the ocean about 3 miles east of Whittier, Alaska. The helicopter was operated by Evergreen Alaska Helicopters, Inc., under contract to Providence Hospital, Anchorage, Alaska, as a visual flight rules (VFR) patient transport flight when the accident occurred. Of the four persons aboard, only one body was recovered. The remaining three are presumed to have also died. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed in the area of the accident, and company VFR flight following procedures were in effect.

**\* On December 30, 2007, a Bell 206L-3, N109AE, owned and operated by Air Evac EMS Inc., crashed while maneuvering near Cherokee, Alabama. The certificated airline transport pilot, paramedic, and flight nurse were killed. Night visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and a company flight plan was filed for the local aerial search flight.**

\* On February 5, 2008, a Eurocopter AS350B2 EMS helicopter, N911VA, impacted water on Laguna Madre near South Padre Island, Texas. The helicopter was destroyed. The airline transport pilot, flight nurse, and flight paramedic sustained fatal injuries. The helicopter was operated by Metro Aviation, Inc., doing business as Valley Air Care, Harlingen, Texas. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. The flight was en route to pick up a patient at an emergency landing zone in the parking lot of the South Padre Island Convention Center.

\* On May 10, 2008, a Eurocopter EC 135 T2+ EMS helicopter, N135UW, operated by Air Methods Corporation, was destroyed during an in-flight collision with trees and terrain near La Crosse, Wisconsin. Night visual meteorological conditions

prevailed. The pilot, physician and flight nurse sustained fatal injuries.

\* On June 8, 2008, a Bell 407 EMS helicopter, N416PH, owned by PHI, Inc., and operated as Med 12, was destroyed when it impacted a heavily forested area in the Sam Houston National Forest, south of Huntsville, Texas. Night visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The pilot, flight nurse, flight paramedic, and passenger were fatally injured. The flight had departed Huntsville Memorial Hospital Heliport after picking up a patient, and was en route to Herman Memorial Hospital, Houston, Texas.

\* On June 29, 2008, a Bell 407 EMS helicopter, N407GA, and a Bell 407 EMS helicopter, N407MJ, collided in mid air while approaching the Flagstaff Medical Center helipad, Flagstaff, Arizona. Both helicopters were destroyed, and all 7 persons aboard the two aircraft were killed. N407GA was operated by Air Methods Corporation, Englewood, Colorado, and registered to Flagstaff Medical Center. N407MJ was operated by Classic Helicopter Services, Page, Arizona, and registered to M&J Leisure, L.L.C., Ogden, Utah. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and company flight plans were filed for both flights. N407GA's flight departed Flagstaff Pulliam Airport and N407MJ's flight departed the Grand Canyon National Park Service South Rim helibase, Tusayan, Arizona.

\* On August 31, 2008, a Bell 206L-1 helicopter, N37AE, operated by Air Evac EMS Inc., was destroyed during an in-flight collision with terrain and post impact fire near Greensburg, Indiana. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. The pilot, flight nurse, and paramedic sustained fatal injuries. The accident flight departed at from Burney, Indiana, with the intention of returning to the aircraft's base located in Rushville, Indiana.

\* On September 27, 2008, an Aerospatiale (Eurocopter) AS365N1, N92MD, call sign Trooper 2, registered to and operated by the Maryland State Police (MSP) as a public use EMS flight, was substantially damaged when it collided with trees and terrain in Walker Mill Regional Park, District Heights, Maryland. The flight had been cleared by air traffic control (ATC) for an instrument landing system (ILS) approach to runway 19R at Andrews Air Force Base, Camp Springs, Maryland. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident, and no flight plan was filed. The commercial pilot, one flight paramedic, one field provider, and one of two automobile accident patients being transported were fatally injured. The other patient being transported survived the helicopter accident and was taken to a local hospital with serious injuries. The flight originated from a landing zone located at Wade Elementary School, Waldorf, Maryland, in VFR conditions destined for the Prince George's County Hospital, Cheverly, Maryland.

\* On October 15, 2008, a Bell 222 helicopter, N992AA, operated by Air Angels Inc., and piloted by a commercial pilot, was destroyed when it impacted a radio station tower and the ground in Aurora, Illinois. A post crash fire ensued. The EMS was en route from the Valley West Hospital Heliport, Sandwich, Illinois, to the Children's Memorial

Hospital Heliport, Chicago, Illinois, when the accident occurred. Night visual meteorological conditions prevailed in the area of the accident site. All four occupants, including the pilot, a flight paramedic, a flight nurse, and the patient, were fatally injured. The flight originated about 10 minutes prior to the accident.

The information being released on five of these nine investigations is factual in nature and does not provide any analysis. It will include investigative group factual reports, interview transcripts, and other documents from the investigation. Additional material will be added to the dockets as it becomes available. The public may view and download the docket contents via our web site at [www.nts.gov](http://www.nts.gov), under the "FOIA Reading Room" link on the home page. Analysis of the accidents, along with conclusions and a determination of probable cause, will come at a later date when the final reports on the investigations are completed.

**Final reports on four of these investigations, including the probable cause, and brief analysis will be released along with dockets. These cases are the following:**

\* December 3, 2007, accident involving a Eurocopter BK117C1 helicopter, N141LG, near Whittier, Alaska.

**\* December 30, 2007, accident involving a Bell 206L-3, N109AE, owned and operated by Air Evac EMS Inc., near Cherokee, Alabama.**

\* February 5, 2008, accident involving Eurocopter AS350B2 EMS helicopter, N911VA, near South Padre Island, Texas.

\* June 8, 2008, accident involving a Bell 407 EMS helicopter, N416PH, owned by PHI, Inc., and operated as Med 12, south of Huntsville, Texas.

This will be a document release only; no interviews will be conducted.

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