



PRESS RELEASE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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Accident investigation finds disorientation, insufficient corrective action as cause for helicopter mishap

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas- Today, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command officials released the aircraft accident investigation board report for the Bell TH-1H mishap incident at Skelly Stagefield Army Heliport, Alabama, that occurred April 3, 2024.

The mishap occurred during helicopter undergraduate pilot training, as a student pilot was being trained in takeoffs and landings on a sloped surface.

The board president found, by preponderance of the evidence, that the mishap was caused by the student pilot perceiving the helicopter as being level when it was in a rightward bank, combined with the instructor pilot's insufficient corrective action to counter a right roll during a takeoff attempt. Upon the student pilot increasing power to take off, the helicopter rolled to the right, causing the rotor blade to strike the ground.

The fuselage of the aircraft came to a rest on its right side, and all aboard egressed safely. Three student pilots and an instructor pilot, assigned to the 23rd Flying Training Squadron at Fort Novosel in Alabama suffered minor injuries.

Members of the 23rd FTS train undergraduate aircrew members in all aspects of helicopter operations for follow-on training in special operations, combat search and rescue, missile support, and distinguished visitor airlift missions. Damage to the aircraft is estimated at \$10,846,674.