BELL 525 RELENTLESS PROTOTYPE CRASHES

News / Manufacturer



Bell Helicopter has confirmed one of its two 525 Relentless prototypes crashed while conducting developmental flight test operations, fatally injuring two of its flight test crew.

The bright orange panted 525, Bell's first Relentless prototype to fly, N525TA, came down in a field south-east of the manufacturer's Arlington, Texas, Xworks facility in Ellis County before midday local time on July 6 (about 0545 AEST July 7) and was destroyed by fire.

Bell Helicopter had just celebrated one year of 525 flight testing after N525TA made its first flight on July 3, 2015.

Imagery from the crash site shows some of the 525's main rotor blades along with the helicopter's severed tail boom located around 400 metres away from the main burnt out wreckage.

"Unfortunately, the accident resulted in a loss of two crew members," reads Bell Helicopters' statement.

"We are deeply saddened by the loss of our teammates and have reached out to their families to offer our support. Bell Helicopter representatives are onsite to assess the situation and provide any assistance to local, state, and federal authorities."

The 525 Relentless test program has completed more than 130 flight test hours with a third prototype about to join the program in an effort for Bell to achieve certification of the type in late

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