

Hughes helicopters were displayed earlier this year at Helicopter Association of America show in Tucson, Ariz. The New York Times/Siar Black

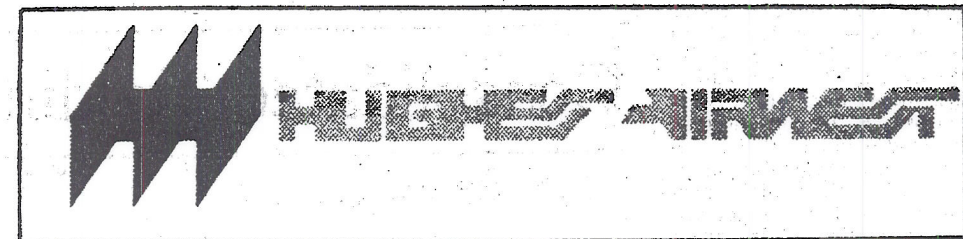
Small Staff Runs Hughes's Summa Corp.

By ROBERT LINDSEY
Special to The New York Times

LOS ANGELES, April 6—The death of Howard R. Hughes has left a vacuum of ownership and an abundance of mysteries about the future of an economic empire believed to be worth at least \$1.5 billion and whose interests range across a broad spectrum of American business.

Mr. Hughes was the sole stockholder of the Summa Corporation, an umbrella holding company operated on a day-to-day basis by a small staff in an obscure three-story building in Las Vegas, and controlled from wherever Mr. Hughes, master strategist of the empire, happened to be.

Arlo Sederberg, a spokesman here for Summa, told reporters today that Mr. Hughes's death yesterday should have no immediate effect on day-to-day operations of the company because he generally took no part in the routine operations.



The log and symbol of Hughes Air West

stockholder of Summa," he said. "But he was not a director or officer."

Routine operations, he said, have been directed by three company officers in Las Vegas, aided by a management team of about 30, and they would continue operating their properties as before.

The officers are Frank William Gay, executive vice president; Nadine Henley, senior vice president, and Chester Davis, general counsel. "It will be business as usual," Mr. Sederberg said.

There are four major companies that bear Mr. Hughes's name, only two of which he owned and con-

trolled at his death—Hughes Air West, a regional airline that operates in eight Western states, Canada and Mexico; and Hughes Helicopters, a division of Summa, which is one of the nation's largest producers of military and civilian helicopters.

The two other companies that bear his name are the Hughes Aircraft Corporation of Culver City, Calif., which shares plant property with the helicopter company, and the Hughes Tool Company.

The ownership of Hughes Aircraft, a major producer of space satellites, military missiles and electronic gear, was transferred

by Mr. Hughes to the Howard Hughes Medical Institute in Miami in 1954. He was the sole trustee of the institute.

Hughes Tool of Houston, a manufacturer of oil drilling equipment, and the foundation of the Hughes fortune, because of its ownership of important oil drill patents, was sold by Mr. Hughes to the public in 1972 and is now a publicly held corporation.

In 1972, the billionaire consolidated his remaining holdings under the Summa umbrella. Because it is privately held, no one outside the organization knows how much its holdings are worth,

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or how much revenue they generate.

Only one property, Hughes Airwest, issues any financial reports, and it is required to do so because it is regulated by the Civil Aeronautics Board. At Mr. Hughes's death, Summa owned 78 percent of the stock of the airline, and he personally held 22 percent. Since he solely owned Summa, he held all of the stock in the company.

Last year, the airline said it had revenues of \$169.5 million and earnings of \$1.7 million.

In addition to the airline and helicopter plant, Summa's major holdings are as follows:

¶The Sands, Desert Inn, Frontier, Landmark and Cas-

taways hotel-casinos in Las Vegas; the Silver Slipper, a Las Vegas casino; and Harolds' Club in Reno.

¶Hughes Aviation Services and Hughes Executive Air Terminal at McCarren Airport in Las Vegas, and the North Las Vegas Airport, which is used principally for private flying.

¶Station KLAS-TV, the Columbia Broadcasting System Broadcasting television affiliate in Las Vegas.

¶Large land holdings in the Las Vegas area, including valuable real estate on the casino-lined Las Vegas "Strip," and approximately 30,000 acres of Nevada desert lands referred to as the "Husite" property.

¶A gold-mining operation in Manhattan, Nev., and a 1,200-acre silver and gold

mining facility in central Nevada.

¶The Xanadu Hotel and other properties in the Bahamas.

¶Extensive real estate in Southern California, including a vast area of valuable, undeveloped beachfront property.

¶Theta Cable, a cable television company owned jointly with the Teleprompter ly with the Teleprompter Corporation, and a New York-based television program packager, Hughes Television.

The Summa Corporation directly employs about 12,000 people, Mr. Sederberg said. There are about 6,000 employed in Nevada, where it is the state's largest private employer; 2,000 at the helicopter plant near here, and 4,000 employed by the airline.