

Narrative

Pilots' safety meeting @ 07:00; discussed weather, forecasted light winds, precipitation and lower cloud ceilings throughout the day. Precipitation forecasted to increase in the evening.

Aircraft preflight @ 07:15, verified aircraft is airworthy and maintenance up to date. First flight lifted from the base of operations @ 08:10. I flew 531AT conducting 3.5 hours and 19 landings within the same area of operations prior to the incident.

The accident occurred on return leg during the take-off phase. Prior to the Initial leg a passenger safety briefing, weight and balance and performance calculations were completed. Company weather report indicated VFR conditions prior to commencement of flight. Then a 14 minute flight to location was completed to a safe landing at N61° 26' 5.23" W148° 45' 54.89", 4,755' MSL at 19:02. Weather consisted of light precipitation, overcast, ceiling 1,800' – 2,000' AGL, and light winds 5 knots. Surface conditions were snow on glacier and flat light. A preflight inspection commenced at 19:50 & aircraft airworthy for the return flight. I loaded passengers and ensured all had seatbelts secured and headsets on, then conducted a pre take off checklist to include magneto check. At approximately 2000, I Began a slow vertical pick up to roughly ~50' AGL, cleared the area & the two helicopters on either side. With an East heading, I began a left pedal turn to the west to ensure visual reference to ridgeline in the distance noting MAP at 23". Midway through pedal turn, with eyes inside I noticed the Full Throttle Light had illuminated, and I had anticipated lowering collective, also noted the tachometer showed engine and rotor speeds were increasing and high rpm warble was received and then I added collective input. Eyes went back outside and visual references outside were all white. Promptly after the helicopter hit the snow, skids level. Helicopter bounced on the skids and then contacted the ground again where it slid on the nose and forward portion of the skids. As it slid on the snow the aircraft began a left roll and turn before ending up on the left side of the aircraft.

I rolled throttle all the way off, shut the fuel control valve off, unlatched my seatbelt, and climbed out of the aircraft. Passengers were able to disembark from the right-hand side of the aircraft where both doors opened with no problem. Other company personnel who were on site assisted me and the passengers from the aircraft. Another company pilot on scene contacted operations through an SOS message utilizing Spider tracks unit at 2005. At 2007 Company contacted JRCC notifying of SOS alert. Initial assessment indicated no injuries and other company personnel notified operations at 2007. An additional company aircraft was dispatched at 2008. Company aircraft transported passengers back to base, landing at 2052 with paramedics available if additional attention was needed.