

# National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety  
Central Region



CEN21FA330

## **MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD**

Pilot History

## **ACCIDENT**

Location: Elgin, Minnesota  
Date: July 19, 2021  
Time: 1600 central daylight time (2000 UTC)  
Airplane: Robinson R44 II; Registration No. N44BJ

## **DISCUSSION**

On August 8, 2020, the pilot was seriously injured when the helicopter he was flying had a mechanical failure of the main rotor drive system that resulted in a forced landing (NTSB Case No. CEN20LA330; Logan, Iowa).

According to medical documentation, as reviewed by Dr. Richard McCluskey with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Civil Aerospace Medical Institute, the FAA sent the pilot a letter dated August 10, 2020, requesting a medical examination to determine if he remained qualified to hold a second-class medical certificate. However, after repeated unanswered requests for evaluation by the treating physician the FAA revoked the pilot's second-class medical certificate in a letter dated February 22, 2021.

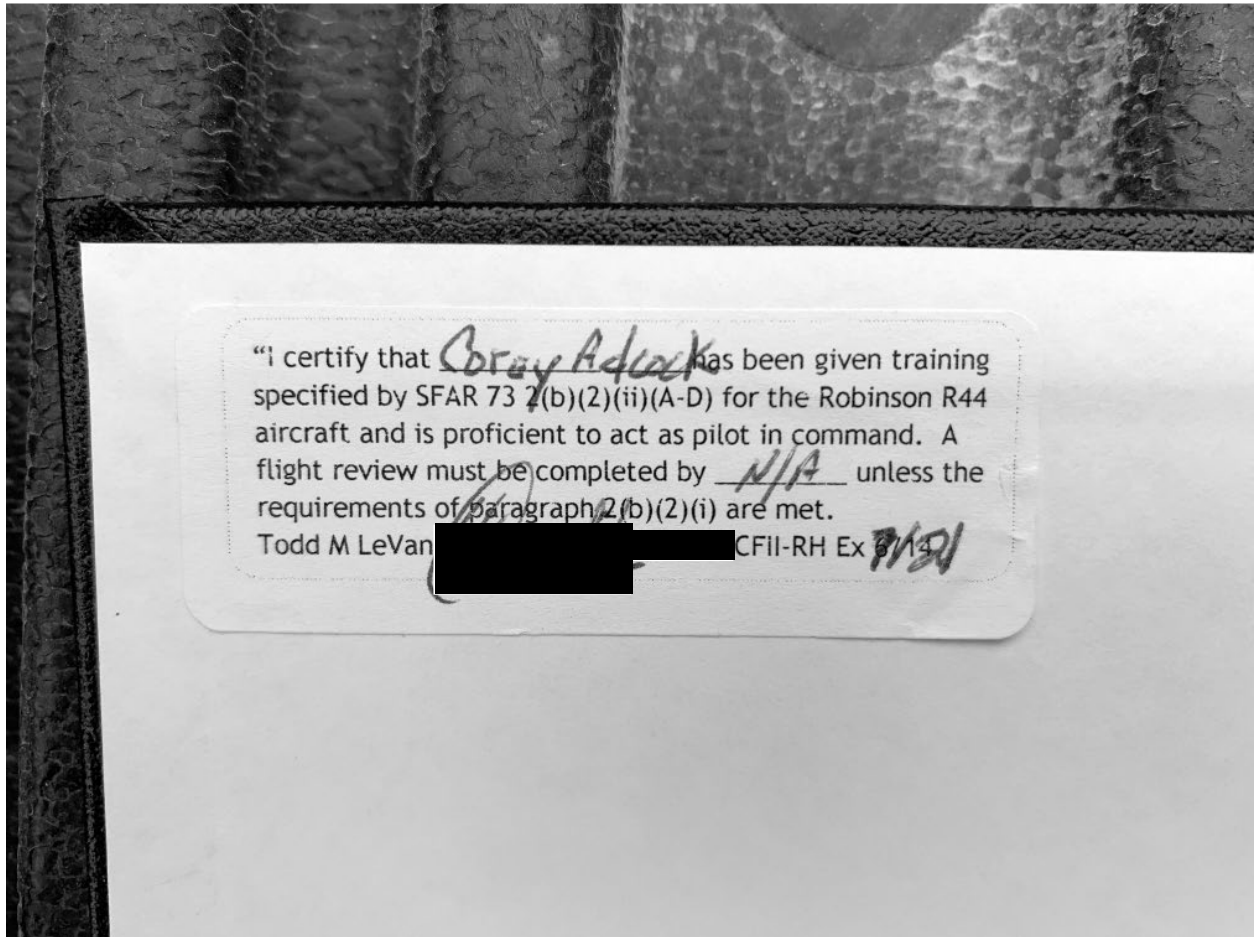
On May 17, 2021, the pilot completed an application for a new medical certificate, on which he reported a hospital admittance for the August 2020 helicopter accident and a driving under the influence (DUI) arrest from 2002. The pilot reported multiple treatments for back pain since the August 2020 helicopter accident. The pilot also answered "No" when asked if his medical certificate had ever been revoked. The aviation medical examiner commented that the pilot would provide information about the 2020 helicopter accident, but the requested records were not provided to the FAA for evaluation.

On June 29, 2021, the FAA sent a letter to the pilot repeating their request for information concerning the August 8, 2020, helicopter accident, and inquired why he checked "No" asking if his medical certificate had ever been revoked. According to the FAA, the pilot had not replied to their June 29, 2021, letter before he died in the July 19, 2021, helicopter accident (NTSB Case No. CEN21FA330; Elgin, Minnesota).

On the his last medical certificate application, dated May 17, 2021, the pilot reported a total flight experience of 4,000 hours, of which 1,100 hours were flown in the previous 6 months.

After the fatal accident on July 19, 2021, a pilot logbook was located with his personal items, but it only contained a single logbook endorsement for the required training as specified by Special Federal Aviation Regulation 73 to act as pilot-in-command of a Robinson R44 helicopter, as shown in figure 1. The remainder of the

logbook was empty and, thus, the investigation was unable to determine the pilot's total flight experience at the time of the accident.



**Figure 1.** Pilot Logbook Endorsement