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Aviation Safety - Central Region

Date: May 7, 2025

Subject: CEN25LA123

Contact: Laura Abraham, NTSB Duty Officer
Donald Bell, FAA Inspector

The following is a summary of information obtained by the NTSB and FAA immediately after the accident occurred.

The pilot stated that he was flying his experimental Rotorway helicopter. During the flight, the tail rotor kept pulling to the left and he did not know why. He landed the helicopter to troubleshoot the issue when the skid got stuck in the mud and the helicopter rolled over. The engine's hot exhaust caught the grass on fire, then the ignited helicopter. The pilot and passenger egressed without issue, but the fire continued and consumed the helicopter; the helicopter was destroyed by the fire. The helicopter's maintenance logbooks were under the pilot's seat and were consumed by the fire. The pilot had just purchased the helicopter about 6 months ago. He stated that all of the helicopter's drive belts were replaced at the 50 hour inspection, but he did not know exactly when that occurred since the logbooks were destroyed.

The FAA visited the accident site but the wreckage had already been removed from the field, and he was unable to located or access the wreckage. The pilot did not respond to inquiries from the FAA or NTSB during the course of the investigation.

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