



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Adam Gerhardt
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region, Office of Aviation Safety (ERA)
National Transportation Safety Board

Date: 1/25/2018

Person Contacted: Alexander Marshall (Flight Instructor, Pilot Flying)

NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA068

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the individual named above:

- He reported that the takeoff was about 1700 local time, and the flight was about 1 minute in duration. The flight departed the Downtown Fort Lauderdale Heliport (DT1), Fort Lauderdale, FL and he was the pilot flying. The student pilot was observing the flight operations.
- The flight instructor reported that the rooftop helipad required a “maximum performance takeoff procedure.” During the takeoff, he reported that he lifted off “slowly” and hovered “straight up,” vertically, to about 30 ft above the helipad. As he began to move the controls to proceed on course, in that instant, the low rotor RPM light and horn activated, and the helicopter started to lose altitude. He immediately attempted to add full throttle, but he realized he already had full throttle applied. The helicopter continued to sink and he performed an autorotation to a street directly below the helipad. The helicopter landed hard, and the tail rotor broke off.
- He added that the low rotor light, horn sounding, and loss of altitude all occurred at the same time.
- He reported that “there was a problem with the engine.”
- Prior to the accident flight, the helicopter originated its flight from the Pelican Flight Training school’s home airport (HWO), North Perry Airport, Hollywood, FL. He reported that the flight to the downtown helipad was normal, and he did not shut down the helicopter during the quick stop.
- He reported that the helicopter departed HWO airport with 24.5 gallons on-board, and the flight to the helipad was about 20 minutes.
- He reported that the student pilot was observing the instructional flight.



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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National Transportation Safety Board

Date: 1/30/2018
Person Contacted: Alex Marshall (Flight Instructor, Pilot Flying)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA068

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the individual named above:

- The flight instructor reported that the student pilot did not hold a student pilot certificate. The student was an enrollee at a local air traffic control training program, and the purpose of the flight was to gain familiarization with pilot-controller communications.
- The flight instructor reported during the engine issue in the initial climb, when the low rotor rpm horn and light activated, he lowered the collective and added throttle, but the actions did not help the situation. He then lowered the collective a second time, and tried to add more throttle, but he realized he was already at full power. The helicopter was “going down slowly,” so he knew he had to perform an “emergency landing.” He then performed an autorotation to the city street below.



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Adam Gerhardt
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region, Office of Aviation Safety (ERA)
National Transportation Safety Board

Date: 3/6/2018
Person Contacted: Alexander Marshall (Flight Instructor, Pilot Flying)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA068

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the individual named above:

- Mr. Marshall reported that sometime within the past 3 months from the accident date, as he could not recall the exact date or time, he experienced an engine anomaly in the accident helicopter and verbally reported the event to the flight school's mechanic.
- He reported to the mechanic after the flight, that while flying in a hover, he felt a small bump, which could be felt in the flight controls. It was like a "knocking" on the tail rotor. The flight instructor further reported that it "didn't seem to be anything serious."
- According to the flight instructor, the mechanic said if he experienced the event again in the future, he should report it.
- The flight instructor reported that he had flown the accident helicopter routinely, at least monthly, for about one year prior to the accident date. He reported that he routinely performed flight training activities, such as hover flight and autorotation's in the accident helicopter. He reported that he follows the pilot's operating handbook and leaves the mixture full rich for all flight operations.