

N911CY Accident Pilot Interview

Interviewee: Alan Heard, 2236786

Interview Date/Time: Wednesday, April 25, 2018; 11:30am EDT

NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA135

Registration: N911CY

Interviewed by: James Seymour, ASI

FAA Office: AEA FSDO 23, Rochester, NY

Statement Date: Tuesday, May 01, 2018

On Wednesday, April 25, 2018, an inspector from this office interviewed the pilot involved in an experimental amateur built helicopter accident in Gaines, NY, which took place the previous day. The pilot, Mr. Alan Heard, was hospitalized at Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester, NY for injuries sustained during the accident. Injuries consisted of severe burns and a broken back. Due to the amount of pain Mr. Heard was in, medical attention he was receiving and the pain medication he was on, the interview was short. However, during this time, I asked Mr. Heard to tell me what happened.

On Tuesday, April 24, 2018, Mr. Heard departed Gaines Valley Airport (NY06) in his Experimental Amateur Built Mosquito XE helicopter, N911CY, s/n MXE1036F07. After departure, he climbed to a height twice as high as the electric wires at the end of the runway. He then proceeded in a westerly direction for 100 yards or so when he noticed a power loss. Looking for a place to put the helicopter down, he descended over a pasture, but before he could land, the engine failed entirely. Unable to perform a proper auto rotation maneuver due, in his terms, to "slow main rotor speed", the helicopter descended rapidly and crashed in the pasture. Mr. Heard was not aware of any unusual noises such as popping or grinding. He did not see an on board fire before the impact and thought that the cause was the fuel tanks bursting when it crashed. After freeing himself from the helicopter wreckage, Mr. Heard, in a lot of pain, struggled with the fire and sustained severe burns. At this time, Mr. Heard remembers Mr. Bennett arriving on scene and helping him move away from the fire and remove his burning clothing.

I asked Mr. Heard if he had performed any recent maintenance on the helicopter to which he replied no. The helicopter was operating normally up to that point, and he was not aware of any mechanical issues with the aircraft before the crash.