



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Brian C. Rayner
Senior Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

June 30, 2018

Subject: ERA18LA161 Fort Morgan AL
Name: Albert W. Pierre - Pilot

Mr. Pierre was the pilot of the accident helicopter. He was interviewed by telephone, and the following is a summary of the interview.

According to the Mr. Pierre, he was delivering the helicopter to a Robinson factory service center. "We were having trouble with the idle power of the helicopter. It was stumbling at idle power, but we had no trouble at the high-power settings. [A local] mechanic couldn't quite figure out what was going on with it, so we were going to have Robinson look at it."

Earlier in the day, Mr. Pierre picked up the helicopter from Destin, Florida and returned it to a company base in Navarre, Florida (FD32). Prior to returning to Navarre, he performed a preflight, a "test flight," returned to FD32 to fly passengers, when the engine stumbled again at idle power during shutdown. He then spoke to the owner of the company, and that's when they decided to fly the helicopter to Baton Rouge for service.

The pilot said he departed FD32 about 1130 and the engine idled smoothly at engine start. It then accelerated smoothly and ran continuously without interruption until the loss of engine power in cruise flight.

While in cruise flight at 400 feet along the beach at 110 knots, the pilot felt "violent shaking" and thought he had flown through turbulence. He added aft cyclic, lowered the collective, scanned the instruments, the shaking stopped, and he noted zero oil pressure, oil pressure light illuminated, rotor rpm decaying, and he then entered autorotation.

The beach was "full of people" and he selected an unoccupied area in the water just off the beach for the forced landing.