

Statement of Dwight Burnett regarding N443SH 06-14-2021

At approximately 10:54 AM Monday June 14, 2021, I was demonstrating various emergency procedures to my front seat passenger at the Jackson County Airport (24A) near Sylva, NC. My back seat passenger was along for added weight and both are employees of Leading Edge Helicopters based in Cherokee NC. and the Leasee of N443SH. We had demoed the straight in and 180 deg autorotation on runway 15, and while close to the ground, I decided to demo the rapid deceleration (quick stop). This procedure is slightly modified by adding left pedal and slightly rolling the throttle down some to prevent the main rotor from over-speeding. The procedure is normally done at 40-40. (approximately 40 ft in altitude and 40 knots) After obtaining the 40-40, I entered the quick stop by pulling back on the cyclic, lowering the collective slightly, applying left pedal, and slightly rolling the throttle back to maybe 80% RPM. Recovery is normally done by just keeping the nose straight, rolling power back in, and maintaining altitude. However the recovery was not consistent with past recoveries, the rotor RPM was not responding as I anticipated, and the altitude had deteriorated to an expected 20 ft or so. I saw there was not going to be a chance of a normal landing so I proceeded to just try to initiate a run-on landing so as to slide forward on the skids. At the low RPM the ground contact was more intense than I expected. The right skid touched the ground first, the helicopter skidded slightly to the right as I was positioned to the right of the center line, causing the skids to collapse on the right side. The helicopter remained upright, but obviously damaged. We all exited the aircraft, checked ourselves and each other for any signs of injury (which there were none), then moved away from the helicopter until emergency personnel arrived. While trying to reconstruct the events in my mind, the only thing I can come up with is that I must not have rolled the throttle all the way up to 100% which allowed the rotor RPM to deteriorate to an unsafe speed. I have done hundreds of this exact same procedure over many years with absolutely no issues whatsoever. I can only assume that the engine speed was not sufficient to produce rotor RPM which resulted in this event. There were no issues with the aircraft engine during any of the previous procedures.

Dwight Burnett

06-15-2021