

On 05/01/2024 Cpl J. Butler and I were transported to Foster Paint shop at KLAL to pick up SO3, Helicopter number N413JM, from being painted. A pre-flight was conducted prior to the flight by both Cpl J. Butler and me. At approximately 1545 hrs, I was seated in the Pilot seat and Cpl. J. Butler was in the left Co-pilot seat. I was the Pilot in Command as we departed Lakeland Regional Airport to the south and out of the Class Delta airspace. The weather conditions were clear VFR as we departed the area. After clearing the airspace to the south, we turned to the west towards KVDF.

Cpl J. Butler wanted to take the controls to practice flying from the Co-pilot seat in preparation for his CFI. There was a positive exchange of controls, and he was now the Pilot in Command. Cpl J. Butler located a grass field south of Hw 60 west of County Rd 39 that was clear of structures, houses, and population. Cpl. J Butler did a high and low reconnaissance of the area in preparation to perform confined area maneuvers. Cpl J Butler had made a confined area approach between two trees bringing the aircraft to a hover with no landing. Cpl J. Butler then located an area for a second approach and brought the helicopter down to approximately 50 AGL turning the helicopter from southwest to the north. As the helicopter began to slow its forward speed, it continued to rotate to the left slowly. The helicopter began to speed up the rotation and Cpl J Butler tried to stop the rotation, but the control inputs were ineffective. After making an undetermined number of rotations, Cpl J. Butler realized that the impact was imminent. Cpl J Butler maintained level flight and minimized impact as much as possible. Cpl J Butler began to shut the helicopter down after touching down so that it would be safe to exit the helicopter.

After the helicopter was shut down, I asked Cpl J. Butler if he was injured, and he said no. We then exited the helicopter and began to check the helicopter for possible fire or fuel leaks, which none were found. Cpl J Butler began to make the necessary notifications.