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Aviation Accident Investigator
Eastern

Date: July 2, 2024, and December 11, 2024

Subject: N99TE; Tail rotor tension bolts and loss of tail rotor effectiveness

Contact: FAA Ops Inspector Christopher Oaks @ [REDACTED]

On June 14, 2024, N99TE flew from the private field to Alma Airport (87FL) Alva, Florida.

After one pass of the airport the helicopter entered what was described as a loss of tail rotor effectiveness (LTE) about 100ft above ground level.

Upon the emergency recovery of the LTE event the helicopter set down on a canal berm and rolled into the canal and flipped over onto its side.

There were no injuries to the pilot and passenger on board. The passenger was also a pilot.

Upon review of the bolt assembly attached in the tail boom; The right side of the tail rotor drive belt jam nut had become loose during the flight more than 3 inches.

The self-locking nylon nut loosened approximately 3 to 4 full rotations. This assembly in the Rotorway Exec keeps tension on the pulley belt system that runs the tail rotor.

On December 11, 2024, at 1045, a follow up conversation with Inspector Oaks was accomplished, reviewing the accident further and if there was anything to add to the summary of our original conversation. Discussed how the pilot/owner stated he was going to add a view port, so he wasn't relying on static tension force.

Sent him a copy of our summary for review. [END]