

May 21, 2025

Sir, this letter is in response to your request for a statement regarding the PennSTAR aircraft N117NC incident that occurred on May 19, 2025 at approximately 1943 hours.

I was single pilot of the aircraft involved. I was on a VFR flight plan for an interfacility patient transfer from Princeton Medical Center Plainsboro, NJ to Penn Presbyterian Medical Center, Philadelphia, Pa. The patient transport was conducted without issue. I departed PA39, Penn Presbyterian Medical Center helipad, and was enroute to KLOM, Wings Airfield, the aircrafts home base.

I was flying at approximately 1300' msl at around 120 kts indicated airspeed. I was about 3-4 miles south of KLOM and was getting ready to enter the left downwind for runway 24.

Without any visual or audio warnings the aircraft became uncontrollable and was shuddering violently. Assuming something catastrophic was happening, I immediately turned into the wind, somewhere around a 330 heading. I realized that I had no tail rotor control with the pedals and had lost tail rotor thrust. I lowered the collective and entered an auto rotational profile. I was able to somewhat stabilize the aircraft in the descent. I identified a grass area I thought I could make a landing to. I landed on a driveway and grass. After landing, the aircraft started to yaw to the right. I immediately lowered the collective and conducted an emergency shutdown and engaged the rotor brake. When all motion had stopped, myself and the crew exited the helicopter under our own power.