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Air Safety Investigator
AS-Eastern Region Aviation

Date: 5/29/2025

Subject: ERA25LA204, Eurocopter Examination Notes

Contact: Seth Buttner, Airbus Helicopters North America

According to Investigator Buttner, the following information was obtained during the examination of the helicopter, then shared via email and discussed with the NTSB IIC, who concurred.

"On 05/28/2025 located at Paradigm aerospace, Mt Pleasant, PA.

*Reviewed aircraft N117NC, S/N 7517, Total Time as of 05/09/2025 is 9731.6.
Inspected aircraft. Metro employees removed the cowlings. Upon initial review, the air-conditioning louver (Kieth STC) P/N 117-0511-1 is missing from the aircraft with the aft portion (yellow) of the louver (frame) still attached. The aft portion shows evidence of tearing (bending aft) at the small areas on each side (left and right) of the tabs on the frame. The rest of the louver departed in flight. Approximately half (right hand) pieces were recovered at the accident site. Evidence does indicate the departed louver contacted the tail rotor blades by evidence of a bent louver panel (In the form of a Blade). Both tail rotor blades were destroyed (with one exhibiting broom-strawing) and the 90 degree gearbox along with the tail rotor was severed from the aircraft. This was also found in the flight path of the aircraft. Evidence shows two rivnuts located at both of the forward attach points of the louver are stripped. One forward bolt (AN3-4A) was found on the engine deck (Right side) and one forward bolt found on the left side(AN3-6A). The forward right corner of the louver was recovered at the sight. This corner has a repair doubler installed, to the right forward corner where the louver attaches. Upon review of the air inlet screen, located fore of the air conditioner louver panel, no evidence of damage to the air inlet was found. The air inlet fits snugly to the louver panel. According to maintenance records, work was done to the air*

conditioner coil assembly, including removal of the air conditioner louver panel, approximately 15.7 flight hours prior to the accident.

The aft attachment flange for the air conditioner louver panel, which was yellow in color (likely replaced at some point in the life of the air conditioner assembly) remained attached to the air conditioner coil assembly with its attachment hardware.

The louver panel attachment bolt that was found on the lefthand side (in the area driveshaft plenum) of the aircraft was longer (AN3-6A) than the bolt found on the righthand side (in the aft deck) of the aircraft (AN3-4A). Both bolts were retained and labelled. The air conditioner pallet assembly and associated subject components were completely removed from the aircraft and were retained for possible future examination and will remain under NTSB quarantine until the aircraft wreckage is released by the NTSB. Aircraft has the top of vertical stab missing. The gearbox and tail rotor assembly departing the aircraft. The aircraft sustained skid gear spread and the fuselage was displaced 12-18 inches to the left of center upon landing into a soft yard. One main rotor blade (A Blade) has minor damage roughly 3' from the tip. Additionally, the lefthand vertical stabilizer and tail stinger exhibited damage consistent with ground contact."

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