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Date: 07/04/2025

Subject: ERA25LA259, Helicopter examination discussion

Contact: James Muss-FAA Inspector

During a telephone discussion, Federal Aviation Administration inspector Muss reported that upon arrival at the accident site, the helicopter was upright and had been totally consumed by fire. He spoke to the pilot, who reported that approximately 20 minutes into the flight, while turning west, smoke began entering the cockpit. The pilot performed a full-stop autorotation into a hayfield, and the landing did not result in any damage. After landing, the pilot shut down the helicopter and exited. Small flames were observed emerging from the underside of the helicopter near the left side, just aft of the aft skid leg.

On-site examination revealed that much of the helicopter had been consumed by heat from the fire. Fluid-carrying fittings were melted at their connections, and the left engine rocker box cover was melted. The entire fuel system had been destroyed. A review of the maintenance logbooks indicated that the fuel lines had been replaced at 224.4 hours total time, and at the time of the incident flight, the helicopter had accumulated 237.4 hours total time. Due to the extent of the fire damage, the exact origin of the fire could not be determined.

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