

26 February 2017

Started the day with preflighting helicopter N864MH. Preflight went normal. Uncovered the aircraft and removed blade tie downs. Found no discrepancies and signed the preflight off in the aircraft log book. I cleaned the headsets and windows and setup the cockpit. When my lunch kit was ready, I brought it to the helicopter and loaded it in the aft cargo bay.

When our manifests were ready, I reviewed my manifest with Kyle Pratt. Kyle was going to be my training pilot for the day as I am still in training and this flight was going to be my 2<sup>nd</sup> tour flight after I passed my check ride. Kyle had a full helicopter and I had only 2 passengers. Kyle did ask the front desk if we could put equal people in each helicopter but my passengers specifically paid for all seats in the helicopter. So, my flight was with 2 people only.

When we were ready, I called my passengers. I walk them to the helicopter, had the company picture taken and then I briefed my 2 passengers. I seated both people in the front as per my manifest. I did a walk around inspection, got in and started the helicopter per the checklist. After listening to ATIS I made a radio call informing Kyle I was ready to go. He instructed me to start taxiing and he'd follow me out. I rolled to flight, made the company required radio call and picked the helicopter up into a hover. I hover taxied out from R6 and around the building out to the space in-between taxiway H and the access road.

I was hover taxiing north bound in between taxiway H and the access road towards the signature ramp. I was monitoring my taxi speed and height to stay within company mandated limit of 2-3 foot hover and no more than 15 knots ground speed. I was maintaining between 2-5 foot hover and my ground speed was 9 knots. As I approached the entrance to the Signature ramp I was looking for taxiing aircraft. There were a couple of big airplanes on the ramp blocking my view of the ramps exit to the taxiway. I took my eyes off of the Signature ramp to look for a company helicopter that had just taken off because of a radio call made on company frequency. He was informing us that he had to circle the garage because tower hadn't cleared him east bound. As soon as he finished that call, Las Vegas tower called him and apologized for being the phone and cleared him east bound. He then made another radio call on company to let us know he was cleared. By this time my helicopter had completely cleared the markers of taxiway H into the Signature ramp entrance so I moved my eyes from the airborne helicopter to the right for any more taxiing aircraft, brought my eyes inside to verify I switch my radio to tower to prepare to make my call for take off. As I looked up I saw the nose of a big airplane taxiing from behind the parked airplanes. I applied immediate aft cyclic to stop my forward movement to not cut off the taxiing airplane. Per company policy taxiing airplanes on Signature ramp have the right away. Realizing as I pulled aft on the cyclic that my hover of 2-5 feet was too low for tail clearance, I attempted to pull up on the collective to clear the tail. I was unsuccessful and the tail struck the ground.

After the tail struck the ground, I leveled the helicopter and stopped my forward movement. I immediately started a pedal turn to get out of the way of the taxiing airplane and made a radio call on company frequency that I had to return to a parking spot. Kyle saw what happened and he also turned around to allow me to taxi back to parking. Kyle informed dispatch that I had struck the tail of the helicopter on the ground and that we needed maintenance to come out. Kyle instructed me to park on F3. I did as he asked. He took off with his tour. I shut down the helicopter. After the blades stopped, I jumped out, grabbed the video card, help my passengers out and escorted them back inside. Riley Troy was at the dispatch desk and I handed him the video card. Riley instructed me to cover up the helicopter and tie the blades down and then go home and wait for a call from him. I returned to the helicopter and talked to the mechanic who was looking at the tail. He assisted me with writing up the damage and instructed me to not cover the helicopter or tie it down because he had to move the helicopter. I then went home.