

Operational Safety Notice OSN2019-004

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What **NOT** to do with Anti-torque Pedals

Following an uneventful flight, an MDHI 369E helicopter returned to the airport and landed. The two-person crew exited the aircraft and walked away – leaving the engine running. As they left the aircraft behind, Pilot 1, originally in the right-hand seat, asked Pilot 2, originally in the left-hand seat, to reposition the aircraft elsewhere on the airport. Pilot 2 returned to the aircraft, reentered the cockpit on the left-hand side, and proceeded to lift off.

Previously, as the crew prepared to leave the aircraft, Pilot 1 removed his left-hand anti-torque pedal and reinstalled it 180 degrees from its original position, effectively blocking the travel of both anti-torque pedal assemblies.



Original photo courtesy of the FAA

As Pilot 2 lifted off, control of the aircraft was lost, the tail hit the ground, and the aircraft was substantially damaged, but luckily, the pilot was not injured. Pilot 2 was unaware that Pilot 1 had “locked” the anti-torque pedals on the right-hand side of the cockpit.

Locking the anti-torque pedals in this manner is not an MDHI-approved procedure, and may result in substantial aircraft damage and potential pilot injury. Before takeoff, always check that all flight controls are free and correct.

Fly safe!

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