



RECORD OF COMMUNICATION

Michael Huhn
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: January 25, 2016
Person Contacted: Inspector Paul Alukonis (LAS FSDO)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR16LA056

Narrative: The following text is a verbatim extract from an email communication from Inspector Alukonis on this date:

I had a chance to examine the helicopter. Both pedals were free to make a full travel movements. The belly panel was removed and all the push rod attachments were secure and the rods had full and free movement. The forward bell crank in the gear box compartment had a small anomaly. It had very little clearance with the firewall and a witness mark was noted on the firewall where it had scraped paint at some point in time. The firewall did not appear to be buckled. At close examination, the bell crank had a very small amount of clearance when full left pedal was applied and did not contact the firewall. The push rod in the gear box compartment operated freely with full movement. The steel bell crank had full travel as did the push rod through the tail boom. The tail rotor had full and complete change in pitch in both directions. All of these controls were free and easily movable. All the rod ends were intact and did not appear to be worn or eroded. Throughout the system, no FOD was found that would impede movement.

The tail rotor drive system was examined and was intact without damage. The tail rotor experienced what appeared to be a high energy separation of the blades from impact. The main rotor appeared to be undamaged. When the tail rotor was spun, the main rotor turned freely, however the opposite direction was more difficult due the clutch being engaged with tensioned belts. Otherwise, its operation seemed normal. Two flex couplings in the gearbox compartment were intact and undamaged. The flex coupling prior to the tail rotor gear box was intact and appeared undamaged from what I could see through the inspection port. The teletemps on the main rotor gear box, upper bearing sheave, lower bearing sheave, and tail rotor gearbox appeared normal. Meaning they were not completely blacked out due to excessive temperature. The tail rotor gear box had oil and the pitch change bearing operated normally with full throw. The only notable damage to the system was the tail rotor blades themselves.

This was documented with photographs as each component was examined. If you decided to visit the aircraft. You might wish to remove the center console panel for an easy look at the tail rotor push rods. I just crawled under the aircraft to look through the belly panel.