



Memorandum for Record

Fabian Salazar
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Investigator in Charge

NTSB Accident Number: WPR20LA189
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: SA-342J / N342J
Accident Location: Minden, NV
Accident Date: June 21, 2020

William Kyle
A&P /AI
Mechanic for N342J

In a telephone interview with Mr. Kyle, he said that he assisted in the recovery of the helicopter. He said the accident site looked like the helicopter had come straight down and that the remains of the tail boom looked like it had done some flips before it landed.

He said he had been working on N342J ever since the owner brought it to the United States. It arrived from England and a gentleman named Chris, from Apollo Aircraft helped him assemble it. Chris had worked on it in the past when it was in England. He mentioned that Dave Minor, the local DAR at the time, had certified it. Mr. Kyle stated that the helicopter performed very well, and it was a maintenance free helicopter, and nothing ever went wrong with it. The biggest problem he had was dirt getting into the torque meter.

He mentioned that the fenestron gearbox was recently replaced. When asked about the engine, he stated that the only thing he did was the annuals, and that there wasn't enough time on the engine for anything major. He said the clutch was coming up next, but still had some time to go.

When asked about the engine and it possibly being military surplus, he stated that the helicopter originally came from the Berlin Police department, and they have all the maintenance documents for the helicopter. He stated that Chris, from Apollo aircraft, did all the background work on the helicopter and brought it up to speed once it got to the United States. Mr. Kyle said that he followed Chris's checklists and notes to take care of the helicopter. He stated the owner was very good at being aware of the maintenance needs of the helicopter.

When asked if anyone else had done maintenance, he stated that another mechanic replaced the leading-edge tape on the main rotor blades. He stated that he enjoyed working on the helicopter, and that he was an A&P, and an AI.

He stated that he has no other experience working on Turbomeca engines other than this helicopter. He said that [after the accident] there was a big dent in the side of the engine and due to the dent, he didn't think the compressor or turbine wheels would rotate freely.

He mentioned that the transmission would not rotate once it was up on a stand. He said that the pilot left with good oil and he thought the transmission could be empty of oil. He thought there may be an oil cooler line that could have backed off.



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Person Contacted: Bill Kyle, Mechanic

In an email reply, the mechanic stated that there was no difference with the annual engine inspections and the that of Safran Helicopter Engines. He stated that he used the tern N/A as those items were being done as part of the helicopter annual inspection. He stated that the annuals included the Safran requirement for the 30-hour, 60-hour and the 125-hour requirements, and stated that those items were done more frequently than required by Safran, including the engine washes.

Regarding oil changes he stated that when the helicopter came from France, all the fluid had been drained. Upon recommissioning, they were filled with fresh oil of the required type. He stated that the owner had only flown the helicopter 245 hours at the time of the accident, and from the manuals, the oil change recommendations was 500-hours for the transmission, and 1500 hours for the engine.



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In a follow up phone conversation, conducted on June 27, 2022, with the mechanic, he stated that the last engine compressor wash and rinse was accomplished in July 2019 during the annual inspection.

The mechanic stated that he used his rig that he uses for PT-6 engine washes but used a spray nozzle. He stated that he used a diluted detergent and alcohol to clean the compressor. As a detergent he used Rustlick until he ran out then he switched to a light detergent and only used enough for color. He stated that he used a slightly higher pressure to better atomize the solution.

For a procedure, he stated that he would do the procedure on his own and get the engine rotating then spray the solution into the compressor while the engine ran down. He followed the same procedure for the compressor rinse. Afterwards he did not run the engine.



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In an email reply from the mechanic, dated July 7, 2022, he stated that he talked to the owner who recalled doing the power check (T4 ageing follow up procedure) twice. The first one was done with the representative of the previous owner (Chris Keen of Apollo), and the second one was done with a Mr. Randy Sharp while the owner was on an instructional flight. The owner recalled that the procedure was in the flight manual, and he was being shown how to perform the procedure. The mechanic did not have any of the values derived from the procedure and did not recall what the limits were but stated that if the values were not within the required specifications, he would have made the adjustments.