

Kristyn Blocher
Air Safety Investigator
AS-WPR

Date: 5/29/24

Subject: WPR24LA139

Contact: Skyler Tanaka, Certified Flight Instructor

The following is a synopsis of a phone conversation with Mr. Tanaka regarding circumstances around the accident flight involving N4082J:

Mr. Tanaka felt that he had not waited too long to add collective, when in the descending pedal turn, but that he simply did not get the response he had been expecting from the added collective. He stated that the engine did not die and he did not see the RPMs drop. He estimated that he had added about 85% of the available collective just prior to impact with the ground. He stated that he realized shortly before impact, that it was imminent; estimated about one foot above the ground, and that collective had begun to be added about four seconds before ground impact.

He stated that he had often felt pressured to fly with students beyond the helicopter's maximum gross weight limit. He had flown previously, knowing the helicopter was overweight and had not found it to be slow to respond to collective inputs or otherwise perform poorly, when overweight.

The day of the accident, he knew the helicopter would be overweight when they began the flight but felt pressured to proceed with the instructional flight anyway.

The following weights were provided, which applied to the accident flight:

- Aircraft empty weight: 907.28 lbs
- CFI 200 "
- Student 180 "

- Fuel 126 " (21 gallons @ 6 lbs/gallon)
- Baggage 0 "

Total aircraft weight at take off was 1413.28 lbs and the helicopter's maximum gross weight limit was 1370 lbs.