

Statement of Events on July 13, 2024

Aircraft: N473E

Wes Cox, PIC



I came into work around 0800. Checked the schedule and weather for the day. Briefed Nick on the plan and prepared the aircraft (N473E) for the first flight of the day. Conducted an IGE/OGE Hover check and repositioned over to the FBO for the first Passenger pick up around 0945. Manifest received from Nick and Weight and Balance calculated. Picked up 3 packs and departed P52 for Sedona to conduct the Ancient Ways Tour (35 minutes). Completed the Tour and landed back at P52 and off loaded the passengers. No issues noted on 1st flight.

Refueled and reset for the second flight at 1015. Manifest received from Nick and Weight and Balance calculated. Fuel was set around 270 and we loaded up the next 3 passengers for another 35 minute Ancient Ways Tour with N473E. After finishing up the Secret Canyon Tour I headed toward Robbers Roost as our next point on the tour. As I approached the Site I started a slow gradual deceleration and aimed to point the ruins of the Site out the left door so the Passenger on the left rear side could take some photos. I started a gradual descent as well to try and get a better view from the passenger perspective and then I pointed out the ruins at which the passengers confirmed they saw.

At this point as I get ready to fly away a sudden and un-commanded right yaw started. I immediately applied left pedal to arrest the rate and lowered the nose to fly out of it. The Aircraft continued to spin to the right with no noticeable relief from my inputs. I realized then that the left pedal was fully extended and I looked around at the instruments quickly to determine if there was any other failure or cautions at the time. The rotor was low and all other instrumentation was normal. The low rotor audio sounded and I immediately increased collective to stabilize the rotor at which then I saw and increase and flashing digits on the TOT to alert me of the Temperature going high. I continued to apply collective inputs as necessary to control the rotor as best I could while trying to get enough power and lift to assist the aircraft to begin forward flight hoping to gain some transitional lift to fly out of the condition.

The spin to the right continued to be uncontrollable and mostly resistant to my inputs. At that time I decided to lower the collective and force the nose over and conduct a low level auto onto the hard surface below. I monitored the instruments and maintained the RPM within limits as best I could as the aircraft entered a State of Autorotation. The airspeed began to increase and the yaw ceased and just as I started a coupling the left side landing gear struck the surface first and broke off. We bounced a few times and continued to skid forward. I looked at the instruments and all quickly and noticed everything inside was normal and decided to pull in collective and take off again. We went through ETL and continued a climb to a safe altitude. I made a slow turn to the left and then a slow turn to the right to check the flight controls. Everything felt normal and at that point I decided to fly the aircraft back to P52 to offload the passengers to safety. I noticed I couldn't see any visual reference of the left skid at this point and decided to Land as soon as Practicable at the nearest suitable landing area with the primary consideration being that of the safety of the occupants on board.

I took the most direct route back to P52 avoiding Tuzigoot in the last 2 miles or so. I made several calls on 122.7 CTAF/UNICOM for P52 and declared an Emergency in the blind and stated we would be landing at the FBO after a momentary delay on the taxi way. After the second or third call an Embry Riddle Aircraft in the pattern at P52 was transmitting on 122.7 so I asked if they would relay the message to the FBO and traffic and they replied yes, no problem. There was no radio response from the FBO and Nick had no means of communicating with me via radio. I wasn't concerned about the lack of radio communication only because I was confident in Nick's abilities to read the situation and understand what I needed him to do.

I then briefed the passengers on my next plan of action. I told them we would stop in a low hover over the taxi way and if they were comfortable, one at a time when I tell them to, open the rear passenger doors and tell me what they see in relation to a skid or any other object or debris hanging from the A/C. They said no problem we'll take a look. I started with the Left Rear Passenger first as that was the main concern. As she started to open her door she then said it was stuck on something that she believed was the step, but could not see any skid or anything on the left lower side of the A/C. I asked her to close the door and secure it and then asked the Passenger on the Right Rear the same. He opened his door with no issues and said the right skid looks great nothing abnormal looking. I asked him to secure his door and once everyone said they were secure I briefed them on the next step.

I told them that everything will be ok and they will be let out in the grassy area by the FBO. I told them not to unbuckle until Nick made visual and/or physical contact with them. They could then unbuckle one at a time and Nick would assist them out of the aircraft and to a safe distance away while I balance the Helicopter on one skid. I slowly hovered from the taxi way over to a suitable grassy area closer to the FBO and where Nick was waiting. Once I established what I felt was a controllable hover with one skid on solid ground I nodded my head at Nick and he moved over to the A/C and started unloading the passengers one by one starting with the passenger in the right front seat first. He then unloaded the passenger in the right rear and then came back for the last passenger in the left rear. After everyone was offloaded and a safe distance from the aircraft Nick looked at me and nodded and tap the doors meaning they were closed and secure.

I then immediately lifted and hovered to the best area where I could proceed to land the helicopter with as minimum damage as possible. I made sure I was away from the FBO, people, planes, hangers and fuel tanks. I tried to establish as much slope on the left side as I could, but couldn't find enough to set the left side fuselage on to land and shut down without any further damage to the A/C or injury to myself. As I hovered the A/C and slowly lowered the Collective as far as I could to realize there was no gear or surface to catch and support the left side I knew I had to commit and just set it down and try and prevent any further damage or injury to myself. I pulled the Fuel handle (cutting off the fuel) and started to lower the collective and roll off the throttle. When I felt the time was right I put the cyclic into the dirt (left forward) and pushed the collective down fully and cut the throttle (shutting off the

engine). As the main rotor blades contacted the ground and the aircraft was on its left side I pushed full left pedal to try and get the tail rotor blades to bite the dirt and help slow the main rotor blades while simultaneously pulling (applying) the Rotor Brake. Everything stopped turning and I immediately looked at the gauges for any sign of fire and shut everything down. I grabbed the Fire Extinguisher and then the right front door opened and I looked up and it was Nick. I gave him the Fire Extinguisher and then climbed out of the A/C. Nick and I walked around the A/C and opened the engine cowling to make sure there was no Fire or Smoke. No Fire or Smoke was noted and no fluids leaking or spilling on the ground. We then determined the A/C was safe and secured and walked away to the FBO to check on the passengers and debrief everyone. The passengers hugged my neck and said they were ok and were glad I was ok. I told them I was sorry, but I am glad everyone is ok. That's all I cared about and that was my priority from the onset of the events until everyone was safe and secure. EMS, Fire and Police then showed up a few minutes later. Everyone said they were fine and refused medical assistance. After Fire and Police had the A/C scene secured I had Nick take me to the ER for Evaluation and Drug/Alcohol Screening.



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Sedona Air Tours

