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Date: 4/7/2026
Subject: WPR26LA147, Interview with pilot
Contact: [REDACTED], Pilot of N5017G

I spoke with the pilot of N5107G, a Bell 206, regarding the circumstances of the accident that occurred on April 4, 2026.

The pilot explained that he was on a personal flight with his father to gain flight time in their family-owned helicopter. The purpose of the flight was to practice off-airport landings.

After landing in an open meadow, which was approximately 200 yards in size, the pilot decided to take off using a "circling" maneuver. He described this maneuver as making a low-level orbit to gain effective translational lift (ETL).

The pilot reported that he executed a large left-hand orbit close to the ground to gain airspeed when the helicopter began to descend. During this maneuver, the left skid caught the dirt, causing the helicopter to roll over onto its side. It completed at least one full roll before coming to rest on its belly.

The aircraft sustained substantial damage, including the airframe, tail cone, empennage, tail rotor, main rotor blades, and the skids, which were torn off upon impact.

The pilot indicated that he completed his private pilot training at Helipro in San Luis Obispo, California. He then pursued his instrument training at Silverhawk Academy in Caldwell, Idaho. Afterward, he spent time building flight experience with a pilot friend

in Montana before finishing his commercial helicopter training at Str8 Up Aviation in Fort Myers, Florida.

When asked if he had learned the circling maneuver to gain Effective Translational Lift (ETL) during his training, he confirmed that he had. He mentioned that he learned this flying technique both in his flight school in Florida and while flying with an experienced pilot friend in Montana.

He also noted that his father holds a Rotorcraft private pilot's license and purchased the helicopter so they could accumulate flight hours together. Additionally, he mentioned that the aircraft is not insured and that they plan to remove it from the wreckage site once the ground dries out and it becomes feasible to recover it on their own.