From: [redacted]
To: Hicks Michael
Subject: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NTSB FORM 6120.1/ACCIDENT N269P 05/24/2019
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2019 12:55:08 AM
Attachments: 05_24_2019 PIC STATEMENT - Yahoo Mail.pdf

PIC STATEMENT: I am submitting this additional information that I personally feel is pertinent to the accident that occurred on 05/24/2019. I will start in chronological order and lead up to the accident.

* Approximately the beginning of April 2019, the Governor stopped abruptly working on N269P. I was told by my CFI, Mr. Robert Spencer, that he would inform the Mechanic, Mr. Rick De Marinis. However, there was no reason to cancel the training session as we could still fly the helicopter but, I would now need to keep a close eye on rotor RPM and manage the throttle manually accordingly.

* Also, approximately around this same time, the Tail Boom needed to be replaced on N269P as it had timed out. I do not recall specific dates for when this was done just that it was around the same time and I'm fairly certain the Governor failed first.

* On 05/03/2019, I had a training lesson that started out normally. I flew once around the pattern and as I was turning base to final on the second pattern, Mr. Spencer abruptly stated "My Controls!" I verbalized "Your Controls" while simultaneously glancing over to insure he had them. He then called the Control Tower and requested to immediately land and return to the ramp. I was not sure of what was going on. After we landed, he asked me to apply Collective/Cyclic frictions and that he was going to step out of the helicopter and inspect "the back" as he had felt "vibrations" and didn't like it. I firmly kept my hands on the controls after I applied frictions as an event like this had never occurred before. He returned and then instructed me to shut down the helicopter per normal procedure. I then heard him call Rick De Marinis right there from the ramp (Mr. De Marinis can verify this). Mr. Spencer then asked me to "turn on the Battery and tap the Starter" as he wanted to inspect the Impeller Blades. He had me do this several times. This training session was terminated at that time because of these events.

* On 05/06/2019, prior to this lesson beginning, I asked Mr. Spencer "What did Rick say the "vibration problem was?" Mr. Spencer stated that he himself had "cleaned the Impeller Blades" and had then taken the helicopter for a "test flight" and that everything seemed fine. I cannot speak to what Mr. De Marinis said or didn't say or do. The helicopter seemed to perform normally that day (with the exception of the Governor still not working and no explanation as to why).

* On 05/08/2019 I did not train due to N269P requiring a "50-hour inspection" and so was not available for training.

* During the week of 05/13/2019 to 05/17/2019 I did not train due to other training commitments for Mr. Spencer at Western Helicopters on another helicopter. As far as I know, no training took place on N269P.

* On 05/20/2019, I resumed training and I performed a normal preflight. I started the helicopter and all seemed normal up to that point. The Engine was idling normally and as I prepared to engage the rotor (I already had my hand on the switch), the Engine abruptly shut off. It just quit. Complete silence. I looked over at Mr. Spencer and stated "I don't like that;" and he stated, "neither do I." Mr. Spencer then instructed me to revert to our normal start-up procedure from the checklist and everything seemed normal again. I asked Mr. Spencer "what do you think happened?" He stated, "Maybe there was just some air in the fuel line from whatever Rick did on his 50-hour inspection." We then resumed the training session without further incident. (The Governor is still not working and no explanation as to why).

* On 05/22/2019, I performed a normal preflight and attempted to start N269P. After three attempts, it just would not start. Mr. Spencer took over the start-up procedure and finally got the Engine to start after several attempts. We resumed the training session as the Engine seemed to be running normally from that point on. To emphasize the difficulty we had in starting N269P, when Mr. Spencer looked at the Hobbs meter he stated "You flew 0.8 today but, I'm going to take 1/10th off and only charge you 0.7 because of the start-up issue." (This can be verified by my logbook entry and what I was actually charged that day). Mr. Spencer has never done this before. (The Governor

issue remains unchanged).

* On 05/24/2019, the day of the accident, I performed a normal preflight and when Mr. Spencer walked over to N269P, I asked him "What did Rick say about not being able to start the helicopter the last time?" Mr. Spencer replied, "I didn't tell him." On initial start-up of N269P, both Mr. Spencer and I observed that the Fuel Pressure gauge was EXCEEDING the red line. I stated, "I've never seen that before." As I pointed it out, Mr. Spencer agreed that he'd not observed that before either. I asked, "Are we okay to fly?" He noted that the needle had "dropped below red" and stated so. I observed that it wasn't in the Green either at this point but, had dropped below Red. Mr. Spencer stated that we were okay to resume.

At this time, Mr. Spencer took the controls because he quickly wanted to maneuver us out of the area where we were located (parked right in front of Riverside Air Services on our left, a hangar in front of us, and two MD 500 helicopters to our right). I knew that he didn't want to waste time that day as it was Friday and he had been training a Pilot new to the MD 500 turbine helicopter all week and still had another flight to perform with him after my flight. Additionally, he was going on vacation the next morning and would be unavailable the following week so I knew he wanted to be done in a timely manner as he himself stated so.

After giving me back the controls, and before I called the Control Tower, I observed again that the Fuel Pressure gauge was EXCEEDING the red line. I told Mr. Spencer "I don't like that." He stated, "It's okay, I'm keeping an eye on it and it drops back down." I observed again that it was not dropping down into the Green but, simply not exceeding Red. We then discussed that I would fly a couple of patterns and perform a Solo again (this would be my third supervised Solo). I had the controls from this point on. I lifted the helicopter into a hover, called the Control Tower, flew the pattern and landed on Runway 16/Helicopter training area. Mr. Spencer was not completely satisfied with my lift-offs and he stated that he didn't want to see any yaw of the nose to the right because "it's not bad but, I know you're better than that." I then picked up N269P and set her down several times just to practice. I again pointed out that I was observing that the Fuel Pressure gauge was EXCEEDING the red line and again, Mr. Spencer stated that it "drops below Red" and we were okay to continue. I flew two additional patterns and landed and observed essentially the same thing with the same response from Mr. Spencer. When he told me he was going to get out of the helicopter so I could Solo he asked me, "Are you good to do this?" I clearly remember stating, "I'm fine, except I don't like that that Fuel Pressure gauge keeps exceeding Red." Mr. Spencer stated, "It's okay." He then got out and walked over to a safe area.

* Please Reference my very brief Initial Statement that I wrote right after the accident. (I've attached it). I would like to add here that Mr. Spencer instructed me to "Keep it short." I asked Mr. Spencer if I should include anything about the Fuel Pressure gauge Exceeding the red line in this statement and he responded "No."

At this time I would like to state that I POSITIVELY and UNEQUIVOCALLY DID NOT make any abrupt control inputs or add too much left pedal when I was gently getting N269P light on the skids; I was applying just enough left pedal to maintain heading. In fact, I was very focused because I had never observed the erratic behavior of the Fuel Pressure gauge like that before; the Governor was still not working so I was managing the throttle manually as well (which I had not had to do on my previous Solos). So Yes, I was very focused.

Just after I was already light on the skids and right before I lifted N269P into a hover (before all hell broke loose), I distinctly remember the helicopter vibrating because I had a momentary thought about Ground Resonance (I'd never felt vibrations like this before and hence the thought). As I glanced at my power I was approaching 20" of MAP and 3000 Engine RPM already so I gently lifted the ship into a hover. I can only describe what happened next as a rapid, violent, and wrenching yaw to the left, the sound of the Engine revving and the nose of the helicopter slightly tilting up. I managed to bring the helicopter to a stop but not before feeling the left skid hit. This event was over in a matter of seconds. I applied friction to the Collective and noted that the RPM was at 3500 and I rolled the throttle down to 2000 RPM. Of course, I was initially at a loss as to what had just occurred. Just then, Mr. Spencer opened his door and the FIRST WORDS he yelled to me were, "It's not your fault! I saw a puff cloud of white smoke come out of the muffler!"

* On a personal note, my thought process now is that N269P may have not been properly maintained. The ship had been intermittently experiencing strange vibrations; (I know factually another student experienced some issues because he told me directly); the Engine failed completely for me during a run-up and no explanation was given; the Governor had failed and not been repaired or placarded and no explanation was given; N269P would not start up

properly as she had done so in the past, and the over-the-Red-line Fuel Pressure gauge readings I complained about no less than five times that day were essentially dismissed. I feel that the erratic Fuel Pressure gauge readings EXCEEDING the red line contributed to this event. The Engine may have quit momentarily while I was bringing it to a hover or may even had a sudden burst of fuel causing the Engine to be "too rich." There has to be an explanation for the burst of smoke that came out of the exhaust pipe. I know I am a Student Pilot but, I feel that I have a good fundamental understanding of how the H300C works. I cannot speak to what Mr. Rick De Marinis may have known or not known; especially if he wasn't told.

Additionally, my day job of almost 14 years is as a ground transport critical care Registered Nurse. I'm used to interpreting instrumentation and reading monitors in an ambulance and paying close attention to "cautionary" or "red-line" parameters. I don't take any of this lightly. The last thing I'd like to say is that the Schweizer H300C was my helicopter of choice to train on. When there was not one available locally, I trained on a Robinson 22 helicopter for 28.1 hours. My main take away from those lessons, especially on lifting the helicopter, was "gentle, smooth, controlled inputs."

Thank you for your attention.

Juanita Falck, RN
Student Pilot Certificate No.[redacted]