

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: NTSB
Date: Saturday, May 19, 2018 11:50:40 AM

Dear Aaron,

Please see my response as follows. In the case of further enquiry, please don't hesitate to contact me. I will head back to Hong Kong on 4th June 2018. My US phone will not work then but my email is always reachable.

Best Regards,
Richard Chan

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, May 18, 2018 1:35 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: NTSB
Importance: High

Mr Chan,

I appreciate the quick response. Please answer the following questions regarding the accident. I appreciate your account.

1. Name, address and certificate number. Certificates/Ratings.
 - Tsz Kin Richard, Chan, [REDACTED] Tampa, FL 33614.
 - [REDACTED] Date of Issue : 30 May 2016.
2. How many flight hours do you have? Total and in this make/model.
 - Total 717.4 hrs. R22 : 579.1hrs
3. How long have you been flying for Boatpix? And in what capacity?
 - Feb 2017. Flight Instructor and Aerial Photographer.
4. Your location in relationship to the accident helicopter. Degrees, feet, altitude, clock position. Etc.
 - 310 Degree (10 o'clock). 700 feet MSL.
5. What was your route of flight? Where were you heading and for what purpose.
 - The route is direct from Perry Foley (40J) to Destin (KDTS). There is a student waiting for a demo flight at Destin.
6. Describe preflight and departure. What can you tell me about the accident helicopter/pilot preflight and departure.

In the morning of 2 May 2018, I helped Randal to uncover the helicopter. I rolled up the

- a. cover on the ground and handled to him. I didn't see the tie down at that time. Then, I took care of my own stuffs and preflight N341VH.
- b. In fact, I planned to reposition N341VH closer to N923SM after top up the fuel on 1 May 2018. However, I cannot start the engine and so I left the N341VH in the position close to the fuel station. At that time, the fuel level of both helicopters was almost full.
- c. In the morning of 2 May 2018, I asked Randal to come and sat on my left seat before I started the engine. Then, I told him you can go to your helicopter to start up, once I can successfully start the engine. Then, I started N341VH and the engine started working. Randal was delighted I could start N341VH, and he walked to N923SM thereafter.
- d. We took off from Perry Foley (40J) and planned to fly to Destin (KDTS) on 2 May 2018 in the morning. I cannot recall the exact time of departure but I think it was around 8:30am. I attached a photo prior to the flight before we took off in Perry Foley. In the photo, the left side is my helicopter (N341VH) while the right side is N923SM.
- e. When I was ready to take off, I looked at him and signaled him whether he was ready to take off or not. He signaled me not ready. Then, I waited about 1 minute, and looked at him again. He signaled me that he was ready to take off. Then, I followed him as formation flight, and often kept in his 4 to 5 o'clock position. During take-off and enroute to Destin, I didn't see and feel anything unusual. I recalled that the weather is good, sunny and suitable for VFR flight at the time of departure and for the rest of the flight as well.
- f. We flew direct to Destin as formation flight, and I often kept at Randal's 4 to 5 o'clock for his visibility. During the flight, I made a number of radio to him to ensure we were in touch and everything was fine.
- g. At the time of accident occurrence, we were in frequency with Eglin Approach. My position is still at 4 to 5 o'clock at his position. Randal made a radio call to Eglin approach to request entry into their airspace as formation flight. At that time, everything is normal. Altitude is about 700 feet above the shore line, and airspeed is around 75-85 knots as I remembered that there was tail wind. Visibility is good and sunny day.

7. What did you observe leading up to the accident.

- a. After a while, then, I found Randal's helicopter slowed down suddenly, from around 80 knots to less than 30 knots in about 15 seconds. I felt something wrong, and flew to his 10 o'clock position to see what was happening to him. His helicopter continued to fall and reverse gliding. I knew that something must have happened. Then, I saw his helicopter reverse gliding during the fall, and finally crashed into the water with tail rotor hitting the water first, and splash of water and roll over upside down.
- b. Then, I turned around to fix his location, and called the Eglin Approach (Frequency 132.1) that I saw a crashed helicopter in the ocean, and confirmed the crashed helicopter call sign and its location. I continued to orbit N923SM as I don't want to lose his position. My orbit altitude is about 500 feet above the water, and I feel the wind is pretty gusty. I waited about 10 minutes before a R44 came to help. After the R44 confirmed the location of the crashed helicopter, I called Eglin Approach to request going to Destin as I don't have much fuel if I stayed at the location further. Eglin Approach then approved and I told the Approach that "I let the rescue helicopter to take care of my colleague". Then, I landed at Destin after 30 mins later.

8. Where do you stow the tie down ropes/socks? Describe any written procedure or any training the company provides regarding preflight tie down removal and stowage.
- I always stow the tie down under the seat. My habit is to roll the rope, make a simple knot and then put it inside the pocket of the tie down, making sure that the rope won't come out easily. I recalled that there is no company procedure for tie down removal and stowage. We just follow the Robinson preflight checklist that no loose items shall be in the cockpit, and all items shall be properly stowed away under the seat. I usually put the tie down first under the seat, and my personal items on the top. Then, I will ensure that the seat can be properly closed without a gap, followed by locking on the safety belt.
 - I have no idea about how Randal removed and stowed the tie down at the time of his preflight of his helicopter as I am busy with my own stuffs.
9. Open Ended/Brief...Anything additional?
- I have no further comment.

Thanks again,

Aaron McCarter
National Transportation Safety Board
Air Safety Investigator

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE - THIS E-MAIL TRANSMISSION MAY CONTAIN INFORMATION THAT IS PRIVILEGED, CONFIDENTIAL, PROPRIETARY, SUBJECT TO COPYRIGHT, AND/OR EXEMPT FROM DISCLOSURE UNDER APPLICABLE LAW. IT IS FOR THE USE OF INTENDED RECIPIENTS ONLY. If you are not an intended recipient of this message, please notify the original sender immediately by forwarding what you received and then delete all copies of the correspondence and attachments from your computer system. Any use, distribution, or disclosure of this message by unintended recipients is not authorized and may be unlawful.