

ASI James Boles FAA FSDO SO15 IIC Statement of Accident Investigation.

Accident Investigation A-SO-15-21-004 N777CP Crash Landing Green Swamp area Lakeland FL.

On October 16, 2020 The Orlando FSDO was notified of an aircraft accident involving N777CP Bell 206B Helicopter and One (1) crewmember in the Green Swamp Preserve area north of Lakeland FL. Initial reports indicated that the helicopter began to lose altitude while flying at approximately 500 ft. During the short time of decent into the swamp the pilot located an area of smaller trees and initiated a flare and hard landing/crash into the trees. The impact broke off the tail boom and the rotor blades impacted the trees causing separation and tears in the blades. The Pilot was able to exit the aircraft after the controlled crash and he then walked out of the swamp area to locate help and notify authorities of the accident. The wreckage was located deep in the green swamp area and air lifted out and brought to Craig Airport in Jacksonville, FL on 10/26/20 for inspection by the FAA, Bell Helicopter, and Rolls-Royce engine Representatives.

On 11/3 and 11/4/20 The Post accident tear down inspection revealed a loose b-nut on the engine fuel control which could have caused the reduction in engine power and loss of rotor head rpm. After examining the entire aircraft fuselage, engine, transmission, and drive components, the only abnormal finding was the improperly connected line and the lack of torque stripe marking on the line as required by Rolls-Royce Manufactures installation and maintenance manual.

The pilot was the only person on board the aircraft and he did not sustain any injuries in the crash. The pilot was also an Airframe and Power Plant Certificate holder with an Inspection Authorization (IA) and had performed maintenance on the aircraft engine. Based on the maintenance records he was the last person to perform maintenance in the area of the engine where the line was found to be improperly connected or torqued.

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