



Operational Safety Notice OSN2016-001

Issued: December 2016

MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES AND POST-MAINTENANCE INSPECTIONS

Proper helicopter maintenance is critical to flight safety. Appropriate maintenance procedures and post-maintenance inspections are particularly critical for helicopters because of their mechanical and operational complexity and the potentially adverse environments in which they operate.

During a recent post-maintenance check flight, a pilot lost control, crashing into trees and an adjacent house, resulting in substantial damage to the helicopter and minor damage to the house. The pilot was seriously injured.

It was determined that an unapproved and unauthorized procedure was used to “lock” the anti-torque pedals in place to facilitate the installation of the battery. The anti-torque pedals were never “unlocked” prior to flight. During the post-maintenance check flight, the pilot pulled collective to check the governor in hovering flight, and the helicopter began to spin, and control of the helicopter was lost.

In addition, upon removal of the floorboards, two tools were found, along with other debris, but they did not appear to have contributed to the accident.

Each person performing maintenance on a helicopter is required to use the methods, techniques, and practices prescribed in the manufacturers’ maintenance manuals or Instructions for Continued Airworthiness. Deviating from a maintenance procedure requires authorization from an approved or authorized source and should be obtained in writing.

In addition to always following the procedures in the maintenance manuals, consider adding FOD and tool control procedures and quality control procedures to your maintenance operations, as well as addressing human factors in your maintenance operations.

Maintenance procedures developed by MD Helicopters, Inc. are accepted or approved by the Federal Aviation Administration. Carefully follow all maintenance and inspection procedures to help prevent accidents.

Fly safe!

airsafety@MDHelicopters.com