



completed his remote area check in the Red River Training Area and departed for Grandfield Auxiliary Field, Oklahoma to complete his autorotation phase of the check. Prior to the autorotations, Captain Radder departed the aircraft. Upon completion of several autorotations, Lt Ayoub landed, departed the aircraft, and Captain Radder assumed the pilot's position. Takeoff from Grandfield was initiated at 1355C. Captain Radder completed his remote area check in the Red River Training Area, returned to Grandfield and completed the required autorotational maneuvers. Major DuChene had scheduled the flight for 2445 duration but because of a delay in the firefighting exercises, the schedule had to be changed and Major DuChene landed at Grandfield Auxiliary after 1455 to refuel.

Refueling was accomplished and a preflight was conducted by Major DuChene and Captain Radder. A normal start and run-up were performed and a takeoff initiated by Major DuChene at approximately 1505 hours. The IP hover taxied from the refueling area to FSK pad #1 where two student firefighters boarded the helicopter. The two firefighters, SSgt William L. Crawford, 3637 Student Squadron, and A1C Robert A. Blais, 3750 Civil Engineering Group, were students attending course 571500, HH-43B Firefighting Training.

They arrived at Grandfield Auxiliary Field at approximately 0800, 25 October 1966. They were scheduled sling and hoist work during the morning but did little work due to a shortage of aircraft. Both firemen attended a briefing at 1300 hours, 25 October 1966 conducted by MSgt Edward J. Foy, NCOIC of course 571500. This briefing consisted of the afternoon firefighting activities for each team of firefighters. Sgt Crawford and Airman Blais were wearing bunker pants and coat and boots when they boarded the aircraft. Both firefighters fastened themselves in their seats and Airman Blais notified the IP, by hand signals, that they were ready for takeoff. At this point Sgt Crawford drew Airman Blais' attention to an oil leak coming from the ceiling approximately half way between the front and rear of the cabin. Both firemen agreed the leak was not excessive and did not bring this to the attention of either pilot.

Captain Radder executed a normal takeoff and hook-up of the FSK. A hover power check was performed, requiring approximately 30 PSI, and a takeoff initiated. Forward movement began, and at approximately 15 to 20 feet of altitude and 15 to 20 knots ground speed, a loud noise or explosion was heard, immediately followed by a complete power loss. Major DuChene immediately took control of the aircraft. The helicopter settled on top of the FSK and rolled over on the right side. All crew members departed the aircraft immediately.