

UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION COMMAND

**HELICOPTER INCIDENT AT FOB SHANK,
AFGHANISTAN,
29 FEBRUARY 2012
RE: Contract HTC711-09-D-0021**

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

7 March 2012

SUBJECT: N408WC Damage

Per my conversation with MSgt Breaux, N408WC was taxiing in low visibility. It's rotor blades struck the rotor blades of a CH-47 parked in the wrong spot.

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WILLIAM SEAMON
Contract Specialist

Atch 1

From: (b)(6)
To: Hall, Pamela CIV USTRANSCOM AO
Cc: Seamon, William CIV USTRANSCOM AO; Yearian, Carrie CIV USTRANSCOM AO
Subject: N408WC Damage
Date: Friday, March 02, 2012 3:08:15 PM

On 29 Feb 2012, a Sikorsky model S-61 operated by AAR Airlift Group, Inc. and bearing FAA registration N408WC was damaged while under exclusive use contract to the United States Transportation Command in Afghanistan, Contract # HTC711-09-D-0021. The damage occurred at Forward Operating Base Shank while the aircraft was ground taxiing along the centerline of taxiway "Charlie" at the helicopter portion of the Shank Airfield. The right side of the aircraft's rotor disk impacted a single blade of a US Army CH-47 "Chinook" helicopter, a static aircraft parked in parking spot C13 with its blades tied down. It appears that all five main rotor blades of the company's aircraft have been damaged and must be replaced. The extent of damage to other aircraft systems, such as transmission components, airframe and engines, is under investigation. The full extent of the damage to the Chinook is unknown at present, but includes at least damage to one main rotor blade.

The company is still investigating, and understands that the US Army may also be conducting its own investigation. The company's preliminary investigation shows that the N408WC was within inches of the taxiway centerline at the time of the blade strike. After the impact, the aircraft yawed left and experienced main rotor vibrations, and the crew performed an emergency shutdown. All 5 main rotor blades of N408WC were damaged. The aircraft was not towed until Army personnel provided approval to do so. There were no injuries reported, and the aircraft had only crew aboard, no passengers. There was no one aboard the Chinook.

Post incident observations report that the mishap Chinook was parked approximately 15-18 feet further aft (towards the taxi-way) than a similar aircraft parked in an adjacent spot. Reportedly, there are no aircraft parking spot markings, "butt lines," or other markings specific to Chinook aircraft to indicate to their crews where to safely park. The blades of the aft transmission of the Chinook were situated and tied down such that the furthest aft blade of its three-bladed rear rotor system was positioned at the 0530 position (relative to the Chinook's nose), which resulted in a reduced clearance distance than had it been parked with blades in a 12/4/8 position relative to the aircraft's nose.

The following information has been attributed to Army personnel and remains subject to confirmation, and may or may not bear upon liability for damages caused: The incident Chinook was a transient aircraft, parked in a transient revetment designated for Blackhawk parking, but not designed for the larger Chinook. Unconfirmed reports indicate that Shank airfield does not meet Army regulations for taxiway and parking spot widths.

Based on the above, we will note the aircraft as NMCG until the repairs are accomplished. We have blades moving from another site in Afghanistan, and the aircraft should be FMC by Tuesday March 6, 2012. Please let me know if you have any questions or need any further information.

Thanks,

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