



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Buras, Louisiana	Accident Number:	CEN25LA073
Date & Time:	January 8, 2025, 13:00 Local	Registration:	N430JM
Aircraft:	ROBINSON HELICOPTER COMPANY R44 II	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that after returning from a local flight, he entered an in-ground effect hover taxi directly into the wind at the airport. While in the hover the pilot started a right pedal turn when he encountered a sudden right quartering tailwind. The pilot attempted to correct for the sudden wind; however, directional control was immediately lost, and the helicopter impacted the runway upright which resulted in substantial damage to the main rotor system, the fuselage, and tail rotor system.

The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical malfunctions or failures with the helicopter that would have precluded normal operations. At the time of the accident, the pilot was hover taxiing the helicopter with wind from 020° at 15 knots gusting to 20 knots. The pilot stated that the accident could have been prevented by performing a left pedal turn instead of the right pedal turn.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot’s failure to maintain control during a hover taxi with a quartering tailwind.

Findings

Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Environmental issues	(general) - Effect on equipment
Aircraft	Directional control - Incorrect use/operation

Factual Information

History of Flight

Taxi-from runway	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
Taxi-from runway	Attempted remediation/recovery
Taxi-from runway	Ground collision

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	43, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	BasicMed Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 1, 2023
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	3000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 54 hours (Total, this make and model), 3000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 0 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	ROBINSON HELICOPTER COMPANY	Registration:	N430JM
Model/Series:	R44 II	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	2005	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	10733
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 17, 2024 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3032 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-AE1A5
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	205 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KNBG, 1 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	38 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:55 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	317°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	15 knots / 20 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	20°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.35 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	10°C / 10°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Buras, LA	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Buras, LA	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Matidora LS84	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	1 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	04	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2015 ft / 20 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Straight-in

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	29.350896,-89.523582(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Finne, Andrew
Additional Participating Persons:	Hardwick, Robert; FAA-FSDO; Baton Rouge, LA
Original Publish Date:	February 21, 2025
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=199528

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The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).