



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Hobbs, New Mexico	Accident Number:	WPR25LA118
Date & Time:	March 25, 2025, 15:55 Local	Registration:	N7530U
Aircraft:	ROBINSON HELICOPTER COMPANY R44 II	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Dynamic rollover	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

Analysis

The flight instructor reported that the student pilot was on going on a solo flight after being endorsed and completing a dual instruction flight. As the helicopter lifted into a hover, the instructor saw the student jerk the collective and the helicopter spun to the right. The student attempted to recover with cyclic control inputs, but the helicopter dynamically rolled over and impacted terrain. Subsequently, the fuselage and drivetrain sustained substantial damage.

The student pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The student pilot's loss of directional control during a hover, which resulted in an impact with terrain.

Findings

Aircraft	Directional control - Not attained/maintained
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Student/instructed pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Takeoff	Dynamic rollover (Defining event)
Maneuvering-hover	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Student	Age:	67,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	BasicMed	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 24, 2025
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 91.9 hours (Total, all aircraft), 34.6 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	ROBINSON HELICOPTER COMPANY	Registration:	N7530U
Model/Series:	R44 II NO SERIES	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	2004	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	10411
Landing Gear Type:	None; Skid	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	September 3, 2024 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	99 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3546.8 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540
Registered Owner:	FLAP AIR HELICOPTER SERVICE INC	Rated Power:	245 Horsepower
Operator:	FLAP AIR HELICOPTER SERVICE INC	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KHOB, 3655 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	14:50 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	34°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots / 14 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	190°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.07 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	30°C / -10°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Hobbs, NM	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Hobbs, NM	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class D

Airport Information

Airport:	LEA COUNTY RGNL HOB	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	3660 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	32.687349,-103.21752(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Nepomuceno, Eleazar
Additional Participating Persons:	Jason Wilson; Federal Aviation Administration; Lubbock, TX
Original Publish Date:	July 17, 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=199914

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).