



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Taylor, Texas	<b>Accident Number:</b>	CEN25LA302
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	August 3, 2025, 12:22 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N4684S
<b>Aircraft:</b>	ROBINSON HELICOPTER R22 BETA	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Loss of control in flight	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Minor, 1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

## Analysis

During the instructional flight, the flight instructor demonstrated each flight control to the student pilot at an altitude of 1 to 4 ft above the ground, and then allowed the student pilot to manipulate one flight control at a time. The student pilot manipulated the cyclic control several times with no issue but later allowed a slow drift to occur, which moved the helicopter away from its initial ground reference point. The flight instructor then took the flight controls and returned the helicopter to the reference point. During the student pilot's last attempt at manipulating the cyclic control, the helicopter drifted to a dirt area, descended, and its skid contacted the ground. The helicopter rolled over and impacted terrain resulting in substantial damage to the fuselage, main rotor, and main rotor gearbox. The flight instructor stated he was too slow to take the controls from the student pilot, which resulted in the helicopter's impact with terrain. The flight instructor stated there was no mechanical malfunction/failure of the helicopter that would have precluded normal operation.

The Helicopter Instructor's Handbook, FAA-H-8083-4, states in part, "...beginning the flight instruction at altitude is a good way to allow the student to manipulate all of the controls at one time and with a larger margin of error than beginning the flight instruction at a hover."

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

The flight instructor's inadequate supervision and delayed remedial action which resulted in a skid contacting the terrain. Contributing to the accident was the flight instructor's improper judgement to allow the student pilot to manipulate the flight controls at a low altitude/hover.

## Findings

<b>Personnel issues</b>	Monitoring other person - Instructor/check pilot
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Delayed action - Instructor/check pilot
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Decision making/judgment - Instructor/check pilot
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Aircraft control - Instructor/check pilot
<b>Aircraft</b>	(general) - Not attained/maintained

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

<b>Maneuvering-low-alt flying</b>	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
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### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial; Flight instructor	<b>Age:</b>	29,Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	3-point
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	Yes
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter; Instrument helicopter	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	June 28, 2025
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	Yes	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	November 30, 2024
<b>Flight Time:</b>	710 hours (Total, all aircraft), 228 hours (Total, this make and model), 279 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 31 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 19 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

### Student pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	68,Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Right
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	Yes
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	
<b>Medical Certification:</b>		<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	(Estimated) 2000 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	ROBINSON HELICOPTER	<b>Registration:</b>	N4684S
<b>Model/Series:</b>	R22 BETA	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Helicopter
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	1999	<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	2996
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	None; Skid	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	July 10, 2025 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1370 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	4936 Hrs at time of accident	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	LYCOMING
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-360-J2A
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	On file	<b>Rated Power:</b>	145 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	On file	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	T74,600 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	0.15 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	12:15 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	250°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	7 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	None / None
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	90°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	N/A / N/A
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	30.07 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	33°C / 22°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Taylor, TX (T74)	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Taylor, TX (T74)	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	11:15 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	Taylor Municipal Airport T74	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Asphalt;Concrete
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	600 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	
<b>Runway Used:</b>	17	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	4000 ft / 75 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	None

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Minor, 1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Minor, 1 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	30.572639,-97.443194(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Gallo, Mitchell
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Federal Aviation Administration, San Antonio FSDO; San Antonio, TX
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	September 18, 2025
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class 4</a>
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=200693">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=200693</a>

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](#).