



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Los Alamos, New Mexico	Accident Number:	WPR23LA152
Date & Time:	April 5, 2023, 15:00 Local	Registration:	N444M
Aircraft:	Grumman G-44A	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control on ground	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

Analysis

Both pilots reported that during the takeoff roll, the pilot receiving instruction lost directional control of the airplane and it veered off the runway. The airplane subsequently collided with a parked unoccupied airplane. The left horizontal stabilizer and elevator sustained substantial damage. The flight instructor reported that the airplane was not equipped with brakes at the right seat position. Both pilots reported that there were no preaccident mechanical malfunctions or failures 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 pilot receiving instruction's failure to maintain directional control during the takeoff roll, resulting in a runway excursion and ground collision.

Findings

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

Factual Information

History of Flight

Takeoff	Loss of control on ground (Defining event)
Takeoff	Runway excursion
Takeoff	Ground collision

Flight instructor Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial; Flight engineer; Flight instructor	Age:	69,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land; Multi-engine sea	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Airship; Balloon; Glider; Helicopter	Restraint Used:	Unknown
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Glider; Helicopter; Instrument airplane	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	June 28, 2022
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	May 4, 2022
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 29296 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2000 hours (Total, this make and model), 22428 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 82 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 12 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial; Flight engineer; Flight instructor	Age:	59,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Unknown
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane single-engine; Instrument airplane	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 1 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 15, 2023
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	October 10, 2022
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 17600 hours (Total, all aircraft), 8 hours (Total, this make and model), 6100 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 136 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 78 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Grumman	Registration:	N444M
Model/Series:	G-44A	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1945	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	1411
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tailwheel; Amphibian; Hull	Seats:	5
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 3, 2023 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	5500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	11.7 Hrs	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3381.6 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	C126 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	GO-480 B1D
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	270 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:	KLAM, 7171 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	15:15 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	286°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	8 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/ None
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/ N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.02 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	5°C / -17°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Los Alamos, NM (KLAM)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Minden, NM (KMEV)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	15:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	Los Alamos Airport KLAM	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	7171 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	09	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	6000 ft / 120 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	35.88,-106.27

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Blocher, Kristyn
Additional Participating Persons:	Vernon Rockett; Federal Aviation Administration
Original Publish Date:	August 17, 2023
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=107035

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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](#).