



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Las Vegas, New Mexico	Accident Number:	DEN04CA062
Date & Time:	April 14, 2004, 17:25 Local	Registration:	N8956Q
Aircraft:	Cessna 180A	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

During the take off roll from runway 14, a gust of wind weathervaned the tail of the airplane into the wind. Subsequently, the airplane nosed over substantially damaging the airplane. The Aviation Routine Weather Report reported winds from 260 degrees at 15 knots, gusting to 25 knots. At 1609, a peak wind from 270 degrees at 30 knots was recorded. According to the Cessna Pilot Operating Handbook, the maximum demonstrated crosswind component is 12 knots. The crosswind component was calculated to be a 12 to 31 knot tailwind.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's decision to takeoff in wind conditions that consisted of a quarterly tailwind and a crosswind in excess of the maximum demonstrated crosswind component, and his failure to maintain directional control.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ROLL/RUN

Findings

1. (C) DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CROSSWIND
3. WEATHER CONDITION - TAILWIND

4. (F) CROSSWIND COMPONENT - EXCEEDED
5. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On April 14, 2004, at approximately 1725 mountain daylight time, a Cessna 180A, N8956Q, was substantially damaged when it nosed over during takeoff roll at Las Vegas Municipal Airport, Las Vegas, New Mexico. The commercial pilot, the sole occupant on board, was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. An instrument flight rules flight plan had been filed for the flight being conducted under the provisions of Title 14 CFR Part 91. The cross-country flight was originating at the time of the accident and was en route to Colorado Springs, Colorado.

According to the pilot, during the take off roll from runway 14, a gust of wind weathervaned the tail of the airplane into the wind. Subsequently, the airplane nosed over, crushing the vertical stabilizer and rudder.

The 1653 Las Vegas METAR (Aviation Routine Weather Report) reported winds from 260 degrees at 15 knots, gusting to 25 knots. At 1609, a peak wind from 270 degrees at 30 knots was recorded. According to the Cessna Pilot Operating Handbook, the maximum demonstrated crosswind component is 12 knots. The crosswind component was calculated to be a 12 to 31 knot tailwind.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Recreational	Age:	65, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	November 5, 2002
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	February 26, 2004
Flight Time:	3254 hours (Total, all aircraft), 17 hours (Total, this make and model), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N8956Q
Model/Series:	180A	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	32776
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 1, 2004 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	23 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5139 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-470K
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	230 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:	LVS,6877 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	16:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	140°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	15 knots / 25 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	260°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.04 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	18°C / -8°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Las Vegas, NM (LVS)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	Colorado Sprgs, CO (COS)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	17:25 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	Las Vegas Municipal Airport LVS	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	6877 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	14	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	8198 ft / 60 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	35.654998,-105.14167

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Bowling, David
Additional Participating Persons:	JD Huss; FAA FSDO; Albuquerque, NM
Original Publish Date:	June 30, 2004
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=59064

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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](#).