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Aviation Safety - Central Region

Date: November 9, 2022

Subject: N771RG, Loss of Control During Takeoff

Contact: Robert Mulholland, PIC, [REDACTED]

I spoke with the pilot of N771RG, Robert Mulholland, following his accident involving N771RG, a Vans RV-7 airplane. The pilot reported that everything leading up to the takeoff was uneventful. He said during the takeoff climb, when the airplane was about 5-6 ft in the air, the airplane encountered a shift in the wind. He stated that the airplane touched back down and went off the side of the runway.

When asked about any problems with the engine, the pilot responded that there were no problems that he could tell from the engine. When asked about the ability to operate the flight controls, the pilot replied that the airplane appeared to be responded appropriately to his control inputs. The pilot thought the accident was due to the shifting winds. The pilot reported that outboard portion of the right wing was damaged, and the right aileron had been torn from the wing. He also reported that the fuel tank had been punctured.

KAPA Airfield Operations reported that the pilot had exited the left side of runway 10 near the C4 intersection. Airfield Ops photo documented the airplane and I gave permission for them to move the airplane so they could reopen the runway.

A review of audio from LiveATC.Net showed that prior to the pilot's departure another airplane reported windshear, a 15-20 knot gain on final on Runway 35R. KAPA tower controller reported that low-level windshear advisories were in effect.

KAPA tower cleared the pilot for takeoff from runway 10 and called the wind from 340° at 9 knots.