



Aaron Sauer
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Office of Aviation Safety - Central Region

Date: 02/16/2023

Subject: CEN23LA108

Contact: Witness

According to the witness, who was a pilot that operated out of the grass airstrip with his airplane, the pilot asked him what direction is normal for takeoff. The witness advised the pilot to depart to the east, and the train located past the end of the airstrip would not be a factor. The pilot and a passenger boarded the airplane for takeoff. The witness observed the airplane traveling to the east and thought the pilot was taxiing, due to the speed, to takeoff on runway 27, which was not what they had just discussed. The witness did not think the pilot applied full throttle for the 1st part of the takeoff roll. The slow acceleration on the takeoff roll continued, the airplane did not reach flying airspeed, the airplane pulled up near the end of the airstrip, stalled, and hit the train. The train is located about 300 ft past the end of the airstrip. The witness stated the winds were calm from the southeast.