



F-16C accident report addendum released

Release Number: 012913

2/7/2013 - **LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va.** -- Air Combat Command released an addendum for the May 4, 2012 F-16C Accident Investigation Board for the crash in the northern portion of the Utah Test and Training Range, west of Hill Air Force Base.

The board president reopened the investigation to reexamine whether a manufacturing inconsistency at the base of the number 17 fan blade, determined to have caused the mishap, should have been identified by maintenance crews. The additional evidence indicates the blade's surface inconsistency could have been detected during the installation inspection at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., in April 2004, but the ability to detect was limited due to lubricants applied during transfer and machining. Additionally, procedures did not require an inspection, and feature-by-feature inspections were not typically completed at the Tinker depot for new blades arriving from the manufacturer.

According to the investigation, failure of the number 17 blade in the first stage fan of the engine caused the mishap. Cracking along the surface and eight years of operating fatigue contributed to structural failure. As a result, the blade broke free from its supporting structure, and caused catastrophic damage to the engine fan, compressor and turbines.

The mishap jet and pilot were assigned to the 421st Fighter Squadron, 388th Fighter Wing at Hill AFB. When the accident occurred, the pilot was conducting a close air support training mission in a two-ship formation during an operational readiness exercise.

For more information, contact Air Combat Command Public Affairs at (757) 764-5007 or e-mail accpa.operations@langley.af.mil.



F-16C accident report released

Release Number: 120905

9/6/2012 - **LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va.** -- Engine failure one hour after takeoff caused an F-16C Falcon to crash May 4, 2012, according to an Air Combat Command Accident Investigation Board report released today. The aircraft crashed in the northern portion of the Utah Test and Training Range, which is located west of Hill Air Force Base.

The mishap jet and pilot are assigned to the 421st Fighter Squadron, 388th Fighter Wing at Hill AFB. When the accident occurred, the pilot was conducting a close-air-support training mission in a two-ship formation during an operational readiness exercise.

According to the investigation, the cause of the mishap was failure of the number 17 blade in the first stage fan of the engine. Cracking along the anomaly in the number 17 fan blade and eight years of operating fatigue attributed to the engine failure. As a result, the blade broke free from its supporting structure and caused catastrophic damage to the engine fan, compressor and turbines. The board president found that the anomaly formed during a manufacturing process; therefore, failure to detect the anomaly during the installation inspection process in 2004 substantially contributed to the mishap.

Following engine failure, the mishap pilot correctly applied all critical action procedures and coordinated his mission flight lead to initiate search and rescue operations. After approximately 90 seconds of failed engine re-starts, the mishap pilot ejected safely; a UTTR emergency response crew and local Life Flight helicopter recovered him shortly thereafter. The mishap aircraft was destroyed upon impact with a loss valued at approximately \$23.9 million. There were no military or civilian personnel injured, nor damage to civilian or other government property.

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