



MEDIA ADVISORY

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SPECIAL TACTICS AIRMEN PERISH IN MILITARY FREEFALL INCIDENT

HURLBURT FIELD, Fla. – Two Special Tactics Airmen have died from injuries sustained in an accident on Eglin Range during military freefall training, Aug. 3, 2015.

Both Airmen were initially injured in the same accident and were rushed to local hospitals where they later died.

Tech Sgt. Timothy A. Officer, Jr., 32, was a Tactical Air Control Party Airman assigned to the 720th Operations Support Squadron. Officer was a 14-year combat veteran with multiple deployments in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom where he earned multiple medals including two Bronze Star Medals (one with Valor) for his bravery against armed enemies of the United States. Officer is survived by his parents.

Tech Sgt. Marty B. Bettelyoun, 35, was a Combat Controller assigned to the 720th OSS. He was a 15-year combat veteran with multiple deployments to several combat zones and sensitive areas around the world. Bettelyoun is survived by his wife and five children.

“Tech. Sergeants Timothy Officer and Marty Bettelyoun were the epitome of a Special Tactics Airman: professional, dedicated and prepared to give their lives in service to their country,” said Col. Wolfe Davidson, 24th Special Operations Wing commander. “Our community has taken a huge loss with their deaths, and they will be sorely missed. They were respected by their peers for not only their ability on the battlefield, but also for their incredible commitment to friends and family. In the face of this tragedy, we will honor their service and their sacrifice, and we request others respect their family's privacy as they take it one day at a time.”

The cause of the incident is not yet determined. More information will be released when an accident investigation is complete. Accident investigations can take up to a year due to rigorous processes that ensure accuracy.

The 720th Operations Support Squadron belongs to the 720th Special Tactics Group, 24th Special Operations Wing, at Hurlburt Field, Fla.

Please direct any media queries to 24th Special Operations Wing Public Affairs at 850-884-3902, or at 24sow.PAO@us.af.mil.