



PRESS RELEASE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas – Today, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command released its Accident Investigation Board report from the aircraft incident involving an F-16C from Holloman Air Force Base, N.M., Oct. 29, 2019.

The board president found, by a preponderance of the evidence, the mishap was caused by the catastrophic failure of the engine resulting from the failure to install the first stage rear air seal during overhaul of the engine's inlet fan module by depot-level maintenance personnel at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma, in September 2016.

As part of a routine training mission, the F-16C aircraft that was being flown in the number three position, experienced catastrophic engine failure that caused an uncontrollable engine fire. The pilot ejected safely and was recovered by a United States Army helicopter team from Fort Bliss, Texas.

The aircraft's final impact was on privately-owned land about 95 miles southeast of the base. The aircraft was valued at about \$24 million and was destroyed upon impact.

The instructor pilot was assigned to the 314th Fighter Squadron, which is under the 54th Fighter Group and the 49th Wing at Holloman AFB.

The mission of the 49th Wing is to build the backbone of combat airpower by producing operationally-ready F-16 and MQ-9 aircrew; deploying combat-ready forces; and enabling Basic Expeditionary Airfield Resources (BEAR) base, Test Group and other mission partners to succeed. The wing trains MQ-9 Reaper pilots and sensor operators and F-16 Fighting Falcon pilots.

The 314th FS mission is to produce world-class F-16 pilots for the combat air forces.

Air Education and Training Command takes every measure to ensure the safety of its aircrews, while delivering superior flight training for the Air Force. AETC is committed to using the lessons learned from this investigation to prevent similar mishaps from happening again.