



News Release

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MQ-9A ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORT RELEASED

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va. – An MQ-9A crashed April 10, 2019 in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility after the aircraft experienced a rapid change in attitude resulting from intermittent departures from controlled flight and a permanent loss of datalink.

At the time of the incident, the 42d Attack Squadron mission control element, 432d Wing, was in control of the aircraft.

Evidence indicates that there were one cause of the mishap. The cause was a loose, flat metallic washer on the Control Console Module that created an electrical short between several pins, resulting in erroneous control inputs being transmitted to the aircraft. One contributing factor of the mishap was inadequately restrained metallic hardware inside the control console assembly. Additionally, limitations in the software fault logic were a substantially contributing factor.

A few minutes into the flight, inputs from ground control station changed simultaneously, including an input to close the fuel shut-off valve and feather the propeller. The pilot and sensor operator attempted to perform emergency engine failure procedures, however the aircraft continued to perform erroneous commands, which kept the engine shut down and prevented it from being restarted. The aircraft crashed at an undisclosed location and was destroyed on site.

Loss of government property is valued at approximately \$11.3 million. The mishap did not cause injuries, fatalities, or damage to private property.

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

