



PRESS RELEASE

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MOUNTAINEERING ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION RELEASED

HURLBURT FIELD, Fla. – A U.S. Air Force pararescueman sustained fatal injuries after he fell from the top of a cliff while accomplishing mountain rescue and mountain climbing training, according to an Air Force Special Operations Command Ground Accident Investigation Board report released today.

Tech. Sgt. Peter Kraines, a Special Tactics PJ with the 24th Special Operations Wing, Pope Army Airfield, North Carolina, died October 8, 2019, while participating in climbing-related training near Boise, Idaho.

Kraines was a member of a five-person training team, consisting of three PJs and two combat controllers. The team's goals were for the PJs to maintain proficiency in traditional and sport climbing techniques, while conducting familiarization training for the CCTs.

At the time of the accident, Kraines was assisting two teammates rappel down a cliff face. He was clipped in to the anchor point as a safety measure. The anchor system failed while the second team member rappelled down, pulling the rope system and Kraines off the top of the cliff.

The team and emergency responders attempted resuscitation without success.

USAF PJs conduct full spectrum personnel recovery, including both conventional and unconventional combat rescue operations, and they must be able to operate in a wide variety of terrains. USAF CCTs deploy, undetected, into combat and hostile environments to establish assault zones and airfields. A mission team may consist of one PJ and one CCT, thus requiring the two to be familiar with the other's skillsets.

In accordance with AFI 51-307, Aerospace and Ground Accident Investigations, the accident investigation board conducted a legal investigation to inquire into all the facts and circumstances surrounding the accident, prepared a publicly-releasable report, and obtained and preserved all available evidence for use in litigation, claims, disciplinary action, and adverse administrative action.

For questions concerning the reports, please contact Air Force Special Operations Command Public Affairs at 850-884-5515. A releasable version of the report is available under the 'AIB' menu on the Air Force Judge Advocate General Corps website at <http://www.afjag.af.mil>. To submit an electronic request for the full report including documentation of supporting evidence, visit <http://www.foia.af.mil/>.