



PRESS RELEASE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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AETC officials release findings from Holloman MQ-9 accident investigation

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas – Today, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command officials released the Abbreviated Accident Investigation Board report from the MQ-9A aircraft incident at Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, Dec. 6, 2021.

During the takeoff portion of a training mission, the aircraft experienced a complete loss of engine power seconds after becoming airborne due to the mission pilot pulling the condition level backward instead of pushing the flap lever forward. Upon realizing that the engine had lost power, the crew initiated an engine restart despite the aircraft not yet reaching the apogee of its flight path. The pilot increased the aircraft's pitch as it decelerated in an unsuccessful attempt to establish a glide. The aircraft stalled, then impacted the runway and exploded, eventually coming to rest just off the runway's improved surface.

The aircraft, which was part of a complete MQ-9 unit costing a combined \$56.5 million, was completely destroyed. There were no injuries or fatalities.

The aircraft was assigned to the 9th Attack Squadron, which is under the 49th Wing at Holloman AFB.

Air Education and Training Command officials take every measure to ensure the safety of 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.