



AIR COMBAT COMMAND

News Release

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ACC RELEASES ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BOARD REPORT FOR F-35A CRASH IN UTAH

JOINT BASE LANGLEY-EUSTIS, Va. – Today, Air Combat Command released an accident investigation board report regarding an F-35A crash that occurred Oct. 19, 2022, at Hill Air Force Base, Utah.

The pilot, who was assigned to the 388th Fighter Wing, safely ejected and sustained minor injuries. The aircraft, valued at approximately \$166.3 million, was destroyed upon impact.

The mishap occurred when a four-ship formation flight was returning to base from a training event in the Utah Test and Training Range airspace.

During final approach to land at Hill AFB, the pilot of the F-35A, who was third to land, experienced a slight rumbling to their aircraft due to wake turbulence from the preceding aircraft. The atmospheric disturbance resulted in erratic inputs to the aircraft's air data application (ADA).

This, in turn, caused erroneous outputs from the ADA and resulted in a condition in which the aircraft flight controls did not respond correctly to the actual current conditions of the F-35A. Manual flight controls did not correctly respond to the pilot's inputs. Recognizing the aircraft was not responding appropriately to control inputs, the pilot selected full afterburner power to attempt to recover to controlled flight. Due to low altitude, low airspeed and sideslip flight path, the pilot was unable to recover the aircraft and initiated ejection.

The ejected pilot landed north of the base fence line and was recovered by military and civilian emergency responders. Debris from the crashed F-35A fanned out, with most of the aircraft impacting within the airfield boundaries. Parts of the cockpit, canopy, and ejection seat landed just outside of the airfield boundary fence line.

The AIB president found the mishap occurred due to air data system errors immediately prior to landing that caused the F-35A to depart controlled flight in which there was no opportunity to recover to controlled flight.

The board president also found one significant contributing factor to be that the pilot did not increase landing spacing from preceding aircraft in accordance with wake turbulence procedures.

The AIB report can be viewed at **[URL here after publication]**