



AIR COMBAT COMMAND

News Release

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MQ-9A ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORT RELEASED

JOINT BASE LANGLEY-EUSTIS, Va. – Today, Air Combat Command released an Accident Investigation Board report for an MQ-9A Reaper that crashed on September 3, 2023, in the water in an undisclosed location within the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. The mishap resulted in no fatalities, nor injuries or reported damage to civilian property. The loss of government property was valued at \$26.1 million.

At the time of the mishap, a Mission Control Element from the 162nd Attack Squadron located at Springfield-Beckley Air National Guard Base, Ohio, was remotely flying the aircraft in the USCENCOM AOR. The MCE was comprised of a pilot and sensor operator.

The AIB president determined the cause of the mishap was the pilot's decision to crash-land, or ditch, the aircraft instead of returning to the Launch Recovery Element in the U.S. Africa Command AOR. This decision was the result of the pilot's failure to correctly run the Electrical System Malfunction checklist, which should have maintained the unambiguous, original Starter-Generator diagnosis and resulted in either a recovery via emergency mission to the LRE; or MCE controlled handoff to the LRE with a new emergency mission as a contingency if power was lost.

The AIB report can be viewed at [the Aircraft Accident Report here](#)