



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AETC releases report on Laughlin T-38 incident

By Air Education and Training Command Public Affairs

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas – Today, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command released its Accident Investigation Board report from the T-38C Talon mishap, which occurred near Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas, Nov. 20, 2017.

One pilot was able to eject safely from the T-38C and sustained minor injuries, while the second pilot was killed at ground impact, after not ejecting from the aircraft.

The cause of the mishap was determined to be left and right gearbox coupling shaft failures and subsequent dual airframe mounted gearbox failure, which resulted in a total hydraulic failure and an uncontrollable aircraft. The Board President also found the lack of maintenance guidance addressing similar repeated failures of the right gearbox was a substantial contributing factor to the mishap.

Additionally, board members also found that the deceased pilot did not eject from the aircraft because the mishap crew failed to complete the ejection seat system checklist and take the second pilot's ejection seat out of safe mode before takeoff. Contributing factors to the accident included task misprioritization and a delayed decision to eject.

The aircraft was assigned to the 87th Flying Training Squadron, which is part of the 47th Flying Training Wing at Laughlin AFB. The destroyed aircraft is valued at approximately \$11 million.

Air Education and Training Command takes every measure to ensure the safety of its 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.

For more information, contact Air Education and Training Command Public Affairs at (210) 652-4400 or via email at aetc.pao@us.af.mil.