



News Release

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CONFINED SPACE MISHAP, GROUND ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORT RELEASED

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va. – An Air Combat Command ground accident investigation board report was released today on the July 12, 2018, death of an Air Force staff sergeant assigned to the 4th Civil Engineer Squadron at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, North Carolina. The Airman was deployed to the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing, which was operating within the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility at the time of the mishap.

On July 8, 2018, a deployed civil engineering team, consisting of the Airman and five other team members, was working on a project to clear a clogged waste line.

The staff sergeant was retrieving a fallen fiberglass cover from the bottom of a hydrogen sulfide gas-contaminated manhole. While ascending the ladder with the cover, the Airman lost consciousness and fell to the bottom of the manhole.

The Airman received cardiopulmonary resuscitation before being transported to the base medical facility. While there his heartbeat was reestablished, but he remained unresponsive and on artificial ventilation.

The Airman was transported to a local trauma center, where he received three days of intensive care with no change in prognosis. He was then airlifted to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, for further assessment. On July 12, 2018, he was taken off life support



following a decision made by the family after medical personnel determined there was no brain activity.

The accident investigation found evidence of acute hydrogen sulfide inhalation, followed by anoxic brain injury and hypoxemic cardiac arrest.

The Air Force is constantly evaluating its procedures with regard to safety and will continue to work to identify process improvements to implement in the future where appropriate.

For more information, contact Air Combat Command Public Affairs at (757) 764-5007 or via e-mail at accpa.operations@us.af.mil.

