



PRESS RELEASE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas – Today, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command released its Accident Investigation Board report from the T-38C aircraft incident at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, May 23, 2018.

During a touch-and-go landing at the base, the mishap aircraft struck a bird shortly after touchdown on Runway 31 right. The resulting damage from the bird strike caused a loss of thrust due to a compressor stall in the right engine. The mishap crew performed low-altitude ejections, sustaining only minor injuries.

The Accident Investigation Board president found, by clear and convincing evidence, two causes led to the destruction of the T-38C. The cause of the mishap was a bird strike in the right engine which, combined with subsequent large and rapid throttle movements caused a compressor stall. Following the compressor stall, pilot task misprioritization resulted in failure to safely climb and accelerate the aircraft, causing the aircraft to stall at low altitude and crash.

The aircraft was assigned to the 50th Flying Training Squadron, which is under the 14th Flying Training Wing at Columbus AFB. The destroyed aircraft is valued at about \$11 million.

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.