



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 317TH TACTICAL AIRLIFT WING (MAC)
POPE AIR FORCE BASE, NORTH CAROLINA 28308

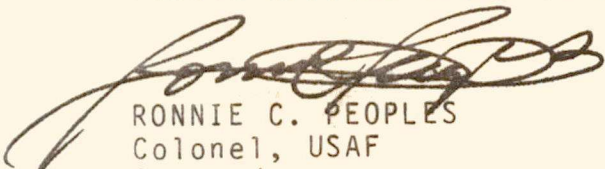
Dear Airlifter

Welcome to Pope Air Force Base.

Whether you are a member of the 317th Tactical Airlift Wing, or are joining one of our support units, I'm sure you'll enjoy your assignment at Pope--the "Home of Tactical Airlift." I'm proud of the role we play in putting the "Air in Airborne." One way you can demonstrate this pride is by letting the folks back home know where you are and what you're doing. You can do this through the Hometown News Release Program.

Attached to this letter you will find a DD Form 2266. If you would please fill it out announcing your assignment to Pope and return it to the Public Affairs Office. They will take care of seeing that it's used to prepare a news story for your hometown newspaper. Please return the completed form to the Public Affairs Office within seven days of receipt if you wish to release this information.

If you have any questions, please call A1C Lehew of the Public Affairs staff at Ext. 4183.


RONNIE C. PEOPLES
Colonel, USAF
Commander

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Crash

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disciplinary actions and is conducted by the staff judge advocate's office of the command that initiated the investigation. Both bodies remain separate throughout their investigations.

Irving said keeping the information confidential has helped the Air Force perform better safety investigations. Both Irving and DeCastro cite the safety investigations as a reason for the Air Force's good safety record.

Currently, MAC has a record of one mishap per 200,000 flying hours. MAC flies about 650,000 to 750,000 hours a year. The entire Air Force has a rate of 1.5 mishaps per 200,000 flying hours, DeCastro said.

Other factors keeping the number of accidents down are better airplanes and better-trained crews, DeCastro said.

Accidents at Pope would be investigated by MAC, whose safety office puts together a list of nominees for the investigation board. Those names would come from other units not involved.

MAC consists of three numbered Air Forces, the 21st, 22nd and 23rd. The 21st Air Force at McGuire Air Force Base is Pope's higher headquarters and nominees would therefore come from the other two Air Forces to avoid any taint of coverup, DeCastro said.

The MAC safety office would select a board from the nominees except for the president. That position would be filled by a full colonel who has been trained as a board president.

DeCastro noted that each major command, such as MAC or the Strategic Airlift Command, has its own method of selecting investigation boards. While the major command conducts the investigation,

the Air Force at any point can take over the investigation, he said.

The board is usually made up of a president; an investigating officer, usually a flight safety officer; an operations officer, usually a senior pilot or navigator; a maintenance specialist; medical specialist; and a recorder who acts as the board's administrative officer.

DeCastro said the board can expand by adding specialists depending on the nature of the investigation and the expertise needed. Boards in the past have even reached into the civilian sector, he said.

He said 80 percent of the board's time is spent discounting reasons for the accident and 20 percent confirming why something happened.

The board is given 30 days to complete its investigation, but DeCastro said boards have in the past recessed if certain information was not immediately available. "But most of the time we can make it in 30 days," he said.

DeCastro said the 30-day clock starts on the day of the mishap. "That's why they (board members) have, literally, at their beck and call any expert."

The board is a hands-on team. While the initial response teams and an interim investigation board is responsible for preserving evidence, the safety investigation team does the in-depth investigation, first on site and then in other places.

An investigation board's makeup is determined by the nature of the accident, DeCastro said. The Air Force classifies accidents into three types: Class C is \$10,000 to \$100,000 damage to the aircraft; Class B, \$100,000 to \$500,000; and Class A, above \$500,000 and/or a fatality.

Quote Of The Week

"We've had a tragedy here today."

— Col. Richard Heinzman, commander of Pope Air Force Base, on Wednesday's crash of a C-130 cargo plane that took the lives of five servicemen.



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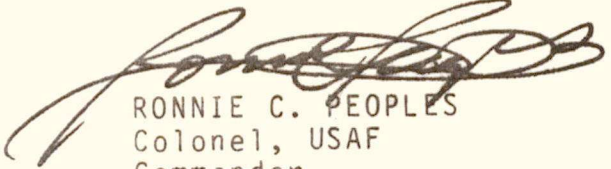
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Air Force Not Likely To Tell Crash Caus

By JASON BRADY
Sunday Staff Writer

The public may never know what caused a Pope Air Force Base Lockheed C-130 Hercules to crash on Wednesday before thousands of spectators at Fort Bragg's Sicily Drop Zone during a low-altitude maneuver.

Air Force officials say safety investigations that follow on the heels of an accident routinely do not include the public release of their results.

Lt. Col. Al DeCastro, of the 317th Standardization and Evaluation Division, said safety investigations into accidents are strictly for the purpose of preventing further mishaps.

DeCastro previously served as the chief of the Military Airlift Command's flight safety office at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., which sponsors the safety investigation boards in MAC.

In an interview Saturday, DeCastro agreed to speak only about the mechanics of routine safety investigation boards, declining to comment on Wednesday's crash that killed four airmen from the 317th Tactical Airlift Wing and an 82nd Airborne Division soldier.

The airplane and its crew were attempting to perform a low-altitude parachute extraction system maneuver before a crowd of spectators at the annual Army-Air Force capabilities exercise. The airplane, expected to fly five to 10 feet off the ground and jettison a Sheridan armored reconnaissance vehicle from its back door, hit the ground hard and rolled to the end of the runway where it exploded, killing four of its six-man crew.

Pope spokesman Capt. Brian Irving said shortly after the incident that the Air Force would not make known all of its findings from the investigation into the cause of the crash. He said an interim investigation team was being formed on the spot and that the official safety investigation team, headed by a full colonel from another base, would take over



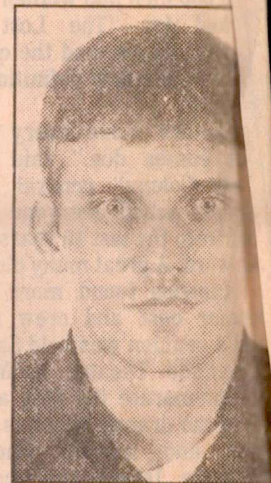
CAPT. BARDO JR.



TECH. SGT. MATAR



CAPT. KEISER III



AIRMAN 1C DUNSE

Crash Survivors Remain 'Serious'

A Staff Report

The two survivors of Wednesday's C-130 crash at Fort Bragg were still listed Saturday in "very seriously ill but stable" condition at Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

A Brooke duty officer said the two, Lt. Marc A. Lenke and Sgt. Tony P. Holmes, arrived in that condition and their status has not changed. The two are in the hospital's burn center located near San Antonio.

Also on Saturday, officials of Pope Air Force Base released photographs of the four airmen killed in the crash. No photograph was available of a Fort Bragg soldier also killed.

Lenke, 26, and Holmes, 28, are the only two survivors of a six-man C-130 Hercules transport crew whose airplane bounced hard onto the dirt runway at Fort Bragg's Sicily Drop Zone, skidded down the runway and exploded after attempting a low-level cargo drop maneuver.

shortly thereafter. The board has arrived, but Pope officials are not revealing any of the team's identity or which units they come from.

DeCastro said safety investigations have priority in any Air Force mishap and come under the Air Force Inspection and Safety Center at Norton Air Force Base, Calif. The center delegates the investigation to the major command whose aircraft is involved.

All Air Force safety investigations have two parts: the first part reports the facts and the second part contains the deliberations of the board, the findings and causes of the mishap. Part two is for official use only, DeCastro said.

DeCastro said the second part of the investigation remains confidential to ensure that information given by participants is truthful. "It cannot be used for punitive

The plane was attempting a low-altitude parachute extraction system maneuver before more than 4,000 spectators at an annual military capabilities exercise.

Four air crew members and an 82nd Airborne Division soldier, who was near the accident site, died when the airplane crashed and burned as it came to the end of the runway, veered off the runway and rolled into a woodline, down a small hill and onto a firebreak.

The soldier killed in the crash was SSgt. Douglas L. Hunter.

Dead are pilot Capt. Garry M. Bardo Jr., navigator Capt. John B. Keiser III, and loadmasters TSgt. Timothy J. Matar and Airman 1st Class Albert G. Dunse.

A memorial service for the four airmen is scheduled for Monday at 2 p.m. at the Pope Base Theater.

A memorial for Hunter was scheduled the following day but has been postponed until July 13.

Pope public affairs officer Capt. Brian Irving said the memorial service is for family and unit members.

measures by anyone," he said.

That rule about privileged information has been upheld in the Supreme Court, DeCastro said.

According to Air Force officials a collateral or accident investigation by a separate body also takes place. Its purpose is to preserve evidence for use in litigation or

(See CRASH, Page 2B)