



Press Release

U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa

AIB Executive Summary

On 11 August 2015, an F-16CM tail number 91-0366, assigned to the 52nd Fighter Wing, Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany experienced an unrecoverable engine malfunction while on a local training mission near Grafenwoehr, Germany resulting in pilot ejection and a total loss of the aircraft. After approximately 29 minutes of flight, the mishap pilot experienced a loss of thrust. Five attempts were made by the mishap pilot to restart the failed engine. Prior to ejection the mishap pilot maneuvered the aircraft away from populated areas; ejecting at 156 knots calibrated air speed and approximately 400 feet above ground level. The mishap pilot sustained minor injuries. Search and Recovery efforts were facilitated by local German nationals, the German Bundeswehr, and the US Army. The mishap aircraft was destroyed upon impact; the loss was valued at \$39,796,422.00. Damage to non-US government property consisted of damage to trees, shrubbery, soil, and crops.

The Accident Investigation Board President determined, by a preponderance of evidence, that the cause of the mishap was a structural failure of the bearing cage within the lower governor ballhead bearing. This structural failure caused the main engine control to malfunction, which prohibited fuel flow to the engine. The lack of fuel flow prevented engine restart and resulted in a complete loss of thrust, requiring the mishap pilot to eject from the mishap aircraft.

Under 10 U.S.C. § 2254(d) the opinion of the accident investigator as to the cause of, or the factors contributing to, the accident set forth in the accident investigation report, if any, may not be considered as evidence in any civil or criminal proceeding arising from the accident, nor may such information be considered an admission of liability of the United States or by any person referred to in those conclusions or statements.