

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

F-16, S/N 83-1169

EGLIN AFB, FL

21 MAR 01

On 21 March 2001, at 0911 (1511 Zulu), an F-16B, S/N 83-1169, assigned to the 46<sup>th</sup> Test Wing, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, was part of a two aircraft training mission to Eglin bombing range C-62. Following the third bombing pass on the range the mishap aircraft flew through a flock of large birds and at least one bird was ingested into the engine. The pilot turned towards the nearest recovery base, Duke Field, and declared an inflight emergency. As a result of the bird strike, the engine suffered major damage including damage to multiple compressor and stator blades in compressor stages 1-4, and 7, a liberated fan blade that ruptured the fan case, a punctured oil tank, a fractured augmentor control actuator and 2 broken fuel lines. A heavy fuel leak developed as a result of the broken fuel lines. The engine continued to operate well enough to allow a safe landing at Duke Field and the pilot was able to taxi clear of the runway at the north end of the airfield and awaited the fire department. The fire department arrived at the mishap aircraft in a timely manner and noted the fuel leak and flash fires coming from the area of the wheel brakes. A large puddle of fuel developed under the jet. A maintenance crew chief attempted to marshal the aircraft forward and away from the puddle of fuel. As the pilot pushed the throttle up to move the aircraft forward, a compressor stall occurred and the engine RPM began to decay. The pilot immediately shut the throttle off. As part of the normal shut down sequence, the engine manifold fuel from the core engine manifold dumped. The wind sprayed this dumped fuel mixed with the leaking fuel over the brakes on the left side of the aircraft. This spray ignited and in turn ignited the puddle of fuel under the jet. After the fuel ignited, the crew accomplished a successful emergency ground egress while the fire department established a rescue path and extinguished the fire. The fire department had the fire out within approximately 10-15 seconds. The fire resulted in damage to the left wing, left wheel, left fuel tank, the launchers and racks on the left wing, an inert training AIM-9, and 2 BDU-33 inert training bombs.

There were no injuries or deaths. The damage was confined to the aircraft engine, engine nacelle, left wing and stores on the left wing.

The primary cause of the accident was the bird ingestion.

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