

**AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BOARD REPORT**  
**F-16C, S/N 84-1273**  
**LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, ARIZONA**  
**14 MAR 2008**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

On 14 Mar 2008, at 1217 local time, an F-16C, serial number 84-1273, impacted the ground approximately 71 miles northwest of Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. The mishap pilot (MP) was killed. The mishap aircraft (MA) and MP were assigned to the 56th Fighter Wing (56 FW), Luke AFB, AZ. The MP was flying a basic fighter maneuver training mission and was under the supervision of the mishap instructor pilot (MIP) in a second F-16C. The MA was totally destroyed, with a loss valued at \$20,990,216.00. The MA crashed in an unpopulated Bureau of Land Management Wilderness Area, causing incidental damage to a small area of vegetation but no damage to private property or structures.

The mishap occurred during an F-16 BFM training mission involving simulated air-to-air combat “dogfights” between the MIP and the MP. The MIP was the 62nd Fighter Squadron Commander. The profile for the mission subjected the pilots to high levels of sustained gravitational forces (G forces, or Gs) of up to 9 Gs, often at high G-onset rates (greater than 6 Gs per second). Thirty-seven minutes into the mission, during a planned high speed turning maneuver characterized by G forces of over 8 Gs, the MA stopped maneuvering, and began a descending flight path consistent with the aircraft no longer being controlled by the pilot. The MA impacted the ground approximately 14 seconds later at a speed of greater than 600 knots. There was no attempt by the pilot to eject.

The MP was an Air National Guard pilot from the 180th FW, Toledo, Ohio, who was undergoing initial F-16 qualification training after having graduated from Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training and the Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals flying courses at Laughlin AFB, Texas.

The Accident Investigation Board (AIB) President found by clear and convincing evidence the cause of the mishap was a G-Induced Loss of Consciousness (G-LOC) experienced by the MP during a high-G maneuver. The AIB President found substantial evidence the G-LOC was caused by the MP’s failure to perform an effective Anti-G Straining Maneuver (AGSM). The AGSM is a muscle-tightening and breathing procedure employed by pilots during high-G maneuvers to ensure sufficient blood flow to the brain to maintain consciousness. The AIB President found no evidence that the condition of the MA contributed to the accident. The AIB President found no evidence that the MP’s physical or mental condition, supervision, or training contributed to the accident.

<p>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 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.</p>
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