AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT
IDENTIFICATION
NO.

7 01 28 1 56

Closed

ORIGINAL

NE:05:do

7 NOV 1957

SPECIAL HANDLING REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART VII OPNAVINST 3750.6B

SECOND ENDORSEMENT on Addendum to NAS St. Louis AAR ser 2-57, concerning F9F-4, BUNO 125184, occurring 28 January 1957, Pilot WHEELER

From: Chief of Naval Air Training
To: Chief of Naval Operations (Op-57)
Via: Director, U. S. Naval Aviation Safety Center

Subj: Aircraft Accident Report; forwarding of addendum to

1. Forwarded.

(b) (6)

By direction

Copy to:
BUAER (2)
CNARESTRA
CO NAS ST. LOUIS (4)

NE/3/N-3.2:ma
A25-9
18 OCT 1957

ORIGINAL

SPECIAL HANDLING REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART VII, OPNAVINST 3750.6B

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on Addendum to NAS, St. Louis AAR ser 2-57, concerning F9F-4, BUNO 125184, accident occurring 28 JAN 1957, pilot WHEELER

From: Chief of Naval Air Reserve Training
To: Chief of Naval Operations (Op-57)
Via: (1) Chief of Naval Air Training
(2) Director, U. S. Naval Aviation Safety Center, NORVA

Subj: Addendum to Aircraft Accident Report; forwarding of

(b) (5)

[redacted]

(b) (6)

[redacted]

By direction

Copy to:
BUAER (Aer-512)
NAVAVIESAFECEN, NORVA (2)
CO, NAS, St. Louis

ORIGINAL

U. S. NAVAL AIR STATION
Saint Louis, Missouri

NA22-13/GDF:flb
A25-9

SPECIAL HANDLING REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART VII OPNAVINST 3750.6B

From: Commanding Officer
To: Chief of Naval Operations (Op-57)
Via: (1) Chief of Naval Air Reserve Training
(2) Chief of Naval Air Training
(3) Chief, Bureau of Aeronautics (Aer-512)
(4) Director, U. S. Naval Aviation Safety Center, NORVA

Subj: Addendum to Naval Air Station Saint Louis AAR Ser 2-57 concerning F9F-4 125184, accident occurring 28 JAN 1957, Pilot WHEELER

Ref: (a) SECOND ENDORSEMENT on Naval Air Station, Saint Louis AAR Ser 2-57

(b) (6), (b) (5)

[redacted]

Copy to:
BuAer (Aer-512) (1)
CN/RESTRA (2)
CO, NAS, North Island (2)
NavSafCen, NorVa (2)

F7F-2D
80302 7-11-57
Closed

Aer-MA-611/1323

18 OCT 1957

FOURTH ENDORSEMENT on VU-10 Aircraft Accident Board ltr 20/jer of 21 Aug 57

From: Chief, Bureau of Aeronautics
To: Chief of Naval Operations
Via: Director, U. S. Naval Aviation Safety Center

Subj: Aircraft Accident Report; forwarding of

1. Forwarded.

[redacted] (b) (6)

By direction

4

Code 100

27 SEP 1957

THIRD ENDORSEMENT on VU-10 Aircraft Accident Board ltr
20/jer of 21 AUG 57

From: Commander Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet
To: Chief of Naval Operations (Op-57)
Via: (1) Chief, Bureau of Aeronautics (MA-61)
(2) Director, U.S. Naval Aviation Safety Center

Subj: VU-10 AAR ser 1-57; additional information concerning

1. Forwarded.

(b) (6)

[redacted]

By direction

5

ORIGINAL

FF7-1/15:rdd
A25
Ser 2233
12 SEPT 1957

SECOND ENDORSEMENT on VU-10 Aircraft Accident Board ltr 20/jer of 21 August 1957

From: Commander Fleet Air, Jacksonville
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-57)
Via: (1) Commander Naval Air Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet
(2) Chief, Bureau of Aeronautics (MA-61)
(3) Director, U. S. Naval Aviation Safety Center

Subj: Utility Squadron TEN AAR ser 1-57; additional information concerning

(b) (5)

[redacted]

W. G. SWITZER

Copy to:
NAVAVSAFCEN (2)
BUAER (MA-61) (2)
CO, VU-10
CO, NAS GTMO BAY

6

ORIGINAL

UNITED STATES ATLANTIC FLEET
NAVAL AIR FORCE
UTILITY SQUADRON TEN

VU-10/A25-1
20/jer
Serial: 681

ORIGINAL

28 August 1957

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on VU-10 AAB ltr of 21 August 1957

From: Commanding Officer, Utility Squadron TEN
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-57)
Via: (1) Commander Fleet Air Jacksonville
(2) Commander Naval Air Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet
(3) Chief, Bureau of Aeronautics (AER-512)
(4) Director, U. S. Naval Aviation Safety Center

Subj: Utility Squadron TEN AAR 1-57; additional information concerning

(b) (5), (b) (6)

[redacted]

A. L. LANE

Copy to:
NASC (2- direct airmail)
BUAER (Aer512) (1 - direct airmail)
COMNAVAIRLANT (1 - direct airmail)
NAS GITMO BAY (1 - direct)
COMFAIRJAX (1 - direct airmail)
CNO (1 - direct airmail)

?

ORIGINAL

3

UNITED STATES ATLANTIC FLEET
NAVAL AIR FORCE
UTILITY SQUADRON TEN

A25-1
20/jer

21 August 195

ORIGINAL

From: Aircraft Accident Board Convened on board Utility Squadron TEN
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-57)
Via: (1) Commanding Officer, Utility Squadron TEN
(2) Commander Fleet Air Jacksonville
(3) Commander Naval Air Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet
(4) Chief, Bureau of Aeronautics (AER-512)
(5) Director, U. S. Naval Aviation Safety Center

Subj: Utility Squadron TEN AIR 1-57; additional information concerning

Ref: (a) COMFAIRJAX Second Endorsement on TU-10 AIR 1-57 dated 5 Aug 57

(b) (5), (b) (6)

[redacted]

ORIGINAL

8

A25-1
20/jer
21 August 1957

(b) (5), (b) (6)

[redacted]

Senior Member

Copy to:
NASC (2 - direct airmail)
BUAER (Aer512) (1 - direct airmail)
COMNAVAIRLANT (1 - direct airmail)
NAS GTMO BAY (1 - direct)
COMFAIRJAX (1 - direct airmail)
CNO (1 - direct airmail)

9

ORIGINAL

2

1-28

SPECIAL HANDLING REQUIRED
IN ACCORDANCE WITH
PART VII, OPNAVINST 3750.63

AER-MA-610/152

2 adv
2-20
IBM

27 JUN 1957

FOURTH ENDORSEMENT on NAS St. Louis AAR Ser 2-57, concerning F9F-4, BUNO 125184, accident occurring 28 Jan 57, pilot WHEELER

From: Chief, Bureau of Aeronautics
To: Chief of Naval Operations
Via: Director, U. S. Naval Aviation Safety Center

Subj: Aircraft Accident Report; forwarding of

(b) (5), (b) (6)

[redacted]

By direction

10

ORIGINAL

ME:05:mr

28 MAR 1957

SPECIAL HANDLING REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART VII OPNAVINST 3750.6B

THIRD ENDORSEMENT on NAS St. Louis AAR Ser 2-57 concerning F9F-4, BUNO 125184, accident occurring 28 January 1957, pilot WHEELER

From: Chief of Naval Air Training
To: Chief of Naval Operations (Op-57)
Via: (1) Chief, Bureau of Aeronautics (Aer-512)
(2) Director, U.S. Naval Aviation Safety Center

Subj: Aircraft Accident Report; forwarding of

(b) (5), (b) (6)

[redacted]

By direction

Copy to:
NAVAVSAFETYCEN (2)
CNATRESTRA
CO NAS ST. LOUIS (4)
CO NAS NORTH ISLAND

ORIGINAL

ma/3 N-3.2:mr
A25-9

6 MAR 1957

SPECIAL HANDLING REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART VII OPNAVINST 3750.6B

SECOND ENDORSEMENT on NAS St Louis AAR ser 2-57 concerning F9F-4, 125184, accident occurring 26 JAN 1957, pilot WHEELER

From: Chief of Naval Air Reserve Training
To: Chief of Naval Operations (Op-57)
Via: (1) Chief of Naval Air Training
(2) Chief, Bureau of Aeronautics (Aer-512)
(3) Director, U. S. Naval Aviation Safety Center, NORVA

Subj: Aircraft Accident Report; forwarding of

(b) (5), (b) (6)

[redacted]

(b) (6)

[redacted]

12

Asst. Chief of Staff
for Training & Operations

Copy to:
BUAER (Aer-512)
NAVAVSAFCEN, NORVA (2)
CO NAS St Louis (4)
CO NAS North Island

ORIGINAL

for PEACE OF MIND BUY SAVINGS BONDS

U. S. NAVAL AIR STATION
NORTH ISLAND
SAN DIEGO 35, CALIFORNIA

IN REPLY REFER TO:

RLH:meh
A25/1
Ser 58-12

FEB 13 1957

From: Commanding Officer, U. S. Naval Air Station, North Island, San Diego 35, California
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-57)
Via: Commanding Officer, U. S. Naval Air Station, St. Louis, Mo.

Subj: Aircraft Accident Report; forwarding of

Ref: (a) OPNAV INSTRUCTION 3750.6B

Encl: (1) Aircraft Accident Report, Ser 2-57, of 28 Jan 1957
(2) Summary of Safety Equipment, Injuries and Cause, of 28 Jan 1957

(b) (5)

[redacted]

JOHN B. BOWEN, JR.

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT
OPNAV FORM 3750-1 (REV. 11-55)
PAGE 1

See instructions for completion prior to filling out

OPNAV REPORT 3750-1

PART I - GENERAL

SECTION A - IDENTIFICATION

1. AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT BOARD CONVENED BY: NAVAL AIR STATION, NORTH ISLAND
2. DATE OF ACCIDENT: 1-28-57 TIME: 1835 Local
3. AAR SERIAL NUMBER: 2-57
4. TO: CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS (Op-57)
5. ENCLOSURES: (1) Photographs # 1 through 6
(2) GCI Controller's Statement
(3) Synoptic Weather en route
(4) Form DD-175
(5)
(6)
(7)
(8)
(9)
6. VIA: (1) NAS ST. LOUIS
(2) CNARESTRA
(3) CNATRA
(4)
(5)
(6)
(LAST) DIRECTOR, U.S. NAVAL AVIATION SAFETY CENTER
7. REPORTING CUSTODIAN (if different than item number 1.): NAS ST. LOUIS
8. ACTIVITY OPERATING AIRCRAFT (if different than item 7)
9. KIND OF FLIGHT: 1 J
10. TIME OF DAY: [ ] DAWN [ ] DAY [ ] DUSK [X] NIGHT
11. LOCATION OF ACCIDENT: 2½ Miles SW COLUMBUS, NEW MEXICO
12. ELEVATION ABOVE SEA: 4024 Ft.
13. PLACE OF LAST TAKE-OFF: Kirtland AFB
14. CLEARED FROM Kirtland AFB TO El Paso Int'l.
15. TYPE CLEARANCE: [ ] IFR [X] VFR [ ] LOCAL [ ] OPERATIONAL [ ] AIRWAYS [X] DIRECT [ ] OTHER (Specify)
16. TIME IN FLIGHT: 0 / 41
17. TYPE ACCIDENT: SPIN - Code D-3 probable
18. PHASE OF FLIGHT: Code 5 probable

AIRCRAFT

19. MODEL: F9F-4
20. SERIAL NUMBER: 125184
21. DAMAGE TO AIRCRAFT: [X] A. [ ] B. [ ] C. [ ] D.
22. DOLLAR COST: 186,000
23. AIRSPEED (Kts): 340
24. A/C WEIGHT: 15,000 lbs
25. LIST MODEL, SER. NO., REPORTING CUSTODIAN AND DAMAGE CLASSIFICATION OF ANY OTHER A/C INVOLVED (complete separate OPNAV Form 3750-1 for each A/C): None

SECTION B - PERSONNEL INFORMATION

PILOT AND CO-PILOT

1. PERSONNEL	2. NAME (last, first and middle initial)	3. RANK/RATE	4. FILE/SERV. NO.	5. DESIGNATOR	6. DATE DESIGNATED	7. DATE OF BIRTH	AGE
PILOT (Person at controls at time of accident)	WHEELER, Chester A.	LCDR	(b) (6) redacted	1317	1 Aug 1943	(b) (6) redacted	35
CO-PILOT							

8. PERSONNEL	9. OPERATIONAL FLIGHT TRAINER AVAILABLE?	9. OPERATIONAL FLIGHT TRAINER USED?	10. UNIT TO WHICH ATTACHED	11. TYPE INSTRUMENT CARD
PILOT	[X] YES [ ] NO	[X] YES [ ] NO	NAS ST LOUIS TAR BILLET	[X] STANDARD [ ] SPECIAL
CO-PILOT	[ ] YES [ ] NO	[ ] YES [ ] NO		[ ] STANDARD [ ] SPECIAL

12. PILOT, CO-PILOT, STUDENT EXPERIENCE

TOTAL PILOT HOURS	PILOT	CO-PILOT	STUDENT	ITEM	PILOT	CO-PILOT	STUDENT
ALL MODELS	2346	252	122	CV LANDINGS DAY/NIGHT	55		
ALL MODELS IN LAST 12 MONTHS	194	63	7	FCLP LANDINGS DAY/NIGHT	168		
ALL MODELS IN LAST 3 MONTHS	39	30	-	INSTRUMENT HOURS, LAST 3 MONTHS	4		
ALL SERIES THIS MODEL	494			NIGHT HOURS, LAST 3 MONTHS	4		
ALL SERIES THIS MODEL, LAST 12 MONTHS	124			(jet accidents only) TOTAL JET PILOT HOURS	701	2	
ALL SERIES THIS MODEL, LAST 3 MONTHS	28			DATE LAST FLIGHT, ALL SERIES THIS MODEL	1/27/57		
				DURATION LAST FLIGHT, ALL SERIES THIS MODEL	1.2		

13. ALL PERSONNEL

NAME (last, first and middle initial)	RANK/RATE	FILE/SERVICE NO.	ORG. TO WHICH ATTACHED	INJURY CODE	BILLET	POSITION
1.				A		
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						

14

(If additional space is necessary, attach additional sheet(s))

OPNAV FORM 3750-1 (REV. 11-55)

PAGE 2

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT

OPNAV REPORT 3750-1

SECTION C - WEATHER

1. CEILING	2. VISIBILITY	3. WIND DIRECTION AND VELOCITY	4. TEMPERATURE	OUTSIDE AIR	RUNWAY	5. DEW POINT	6. ALTIMETER SETTINGS
1500	10	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR

7. OTHER WEATHER CONDITIONS (winds aloft, icing levels, state of sea, etc., if pertinent to accident) Weather in route of flight just prior to accident was 8000 Ft broken with cloud tops estimated at 12000 to 16000 FT and a high overcast prevailed throughout the area resulting in a very poor or no hori-

SECTION D - CAUSE FACTORS (P = Primary factor; S = Secondary factor)

ITEM	P	S	ITEM	P	S	ITEM	P	S

(b) (5)

[redacted]

SECTION E - DEPLOYMENT

FOR ACCIDENTS ABOARD DEPLOYED CARRIERS (Complete following Section on Pilot.)

1. DATE DEPLOYED	2. DAY - HOURS/LANDINGS LOGGED SINCE DEPLOYED	3. DAY - HOURS/LANDINGS LOGGED LAST 30 DAYS
4. INSTRUMENT HRS. LOGGED SINCE DEPLOYMENT	5. NIGHT - HOURS/LANDINGS LOGGED SINCE DEPLOYED	6. NIGHT - HOURS/LANDINGS LOGGED LAST 30 DAYS

PART II - MAINTENANCE, MATERIAL AND FACILITIES DATA

SECTION A - AIRCRAFT AND ENGINE DATA

	DATE OF MANUFACTURE	SERVICE TOUR	MONTHS IN THIS TOUR	TOTAL NO. OF OVERHAULS	FLIGHT HRS. SINCE LAST OVERHAUL	FLIGHT HRS. SINCE ACCEPTANCE	TYPE CHECK LAST PERFORMED	FLIGHT HRS. SINCE LAST CHECK	NO. OF DAYS SINCE LAST CHECK
1. AIRCRAFT HISTORY									
		ENGINE MODEL	SERIAL NO. OF ENGINE						
2. ENGINE HISTORY NO. 1									
NO. 2									
NO. 3									
NO. 4									

3. GENERAL

a. DID FIRE OCCUR: ☐ BEFORE ACCIDENT ☒ AFTER ACCIDENT ☐ DID NOT OCCUR

b. DID EXPLOSION OCCUR IN FLIGHT? ☐ YES ☒ NO

c. CHECK IF APPLICABLE ☐ AMC FOR SERIAL

d. HAS DIR BEEN REQUESTED? ☐ YES ☐ NO

e. FAILED COMPONENTS INVOLVED

4. A/C MAINT. AND ENG. FACTORS

CHECK BELOW ITEMS PRESENT IN THIS ACCIDENT

15

a. ☐ AIRCRAFT DESIGN

b. ☐ AIRCRAFT EQUIPMENT

c. ☐ MAINTENANCE

d. ☐ UNDETERMINED

e. ☐ TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION

f. ☐ OTHER, Specify.....)

g. ☐ SURFACE FACILITIES

h. ☐ HUMAN ENGINEERING (e.g. cockpit configurations)

5. MISCELLANEOUS DATA

a. ALTITUDE AT MALFUNCTION	b. AIR SPEED (KIAS)	c. OPERATING TEMPERATURE	d. WEIGHT OF AIRCRAFT	e. C.G. (% MAC)	f. KIND OF FUEL	g. FUEL PRESSURE

h. EVIDENCE OF FUEL CONTAMINATION

i. CAUSE OF ENGINE FAILURE OR FLAMEOUT

j. FUEL CONTROL REGULATOR/CARBURETOR (List Stock and Ser. nos., give time since new or overhauled

k. EXTERNAL STORES ABOARD A/C

NONE

(If additional space is necessary, attach additional sheet(s))

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT

PART II - MAINTENANCE, MATERIAL AND FACILITIES DATA (Cont'd)

SECTION B - FACILITIES DATA

1. GENERAL (CHECK BASIC FACILITIES INVOLVED, DESCRIBE EFFECT ON ACCIDENT IN THE ANALYSIS SECTION)

- a. ☐ CLEARANCE AUTHORITY
- b. ☐ FLIGHT PLANNING INFORMATION SOURCE
- c. ☐ LANDING AIDS (GCA, CCA, ILS, etc)
- d. ☐ TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER (Field or Ship)
- e. ☐ APPROACH AND ENROUTE AIDS TO NAVIGATION
- f. ☐ RUNWAY WATCH
- g. ☐ LANDING SIGNAL OFFICER
- w. ☐ OTHER (Specify) .....
- h. ☐ RUNWAY
- i. ☐ WATER LANDING AREA
- j. ☐ APPROACH ZONE
- k. ☐ END ZONE
- l. ☐ SHOULDERS
- m. ☐ TAXIWAY
- n. ☐ PARKING AREA
- o. ☐ EMERGENCY ARRESTING GEAR (Runway)
- p. ☐ AIRCRAFT SERVICING, HANDLING AND DIRECTING (Field or Ship)
- q. ☐ CRASH AND RESCUE
- r. ☐ SEARCH AND RESCUE
- s. ☐ CATAPULT
- t. ☐ ARRESTING GEAR (Carrier)
- u. ☐ BARRIER OR BARRICADE (Field or Ship)
- v. ☐ FLIGHT DECK

2. SHIPS DATA

a. EQUIPMENT INVOLVED: ☐ CATAPULT ☐ ARRESTING GEAR | b. PRESSURE SETTINGS | c. WIND OVER DECK | d. RELATIVE HEADWIND | e. APPROACH SPEED (SPN-12 READING)

f. MARK NUMBER | g. MODEL NUMBER | h. LOCATION ON SHIP | i. LAUNCHING BRIDLE AND CONFIGURATION USED

j. CATAPULT/ARRESTING GEAR BULLETINS OR NOMOGRAMS USED

k. This portion shall be completed whenever (1) a major aircraft accident involves arresting gear, barrier and/or barricade equipment, or (2) an aircraft accident involves malfunctioning of arresting gear, barrier and/or barricade equipment. Minor accidents or routine damage to cables, weldings and other expendable components need not be reported.

ENGAGED	DECK RUNOUT (FT.)	RAM TRAVEL (IN.)	CONTROL VALVE SETTINGS			ACCUMULATOR PRESSURE (PSI)	COMMENTS (for cable failure specify number of landings and months in service)
			CONSTANT PRESSURE		CONSTANT RUNOUT (WT. LBS.)		
			DOME (P.S.I.)	RATIO			
DECK PENDANT							
DECK PENDANT							
BARRIER							
BARRIER							
BARRICADE							

PART	SECTION	ITEM	PART III REMARKS (continue on separate pages if necessary)

(b) (5)

[redacted]

16

PART IV - SIGNATURES (INDICATE DATE SUBMITTED TO C.O.)

(b) (6)

[redacted]

Part V - The Accident

At 1754 on 28 January 1957, LCDR Wheeler departed Kirtland AFB on a VFR flight plan ferrying F9F-4 BuNo 125184. All aspects of the flight appeared routine except that weather conditions en route for a night VFR flight were marginal. Destination of flight was El Paso International Airport, a distance of 221 miles, estimated as requiring 45 minutes flight time. Forty-one minutes after becoming airborne the aircraft crashed at a point 41 miles west of desired course. The first navigation check point was Truth or Consequences which had no communication with the pilot.

The next navigation check point was Harrington Ranch fan marker located 88 miles distant. At a time when slightly overdue at Harrington Ranch, contact was made by the pilot with the GCI station located at Las Cruces, New Mexico. He transmitted that he was in a spin, then followed almost immediately with a subsequent transmission that appeared to be, "This is it! out." It was at this time, affixed as 1835, that the aircraft crashed 2½ miles southwest of Columbus, New Mexico. It was observed as it crashed and exploded. The weather was reported as 1500 ft. overcast with light rain.

Part VI - Damage to Aircraft

The aircraft was completely demolished on impact, with fire-explosion intensified by the large amount of fuel remaining aboard. It hit in an estimated 90° nose down attitude with the starboard wing down slightly. Parts were scattered as far as 170 yards in an easterly direction, 180 yards westerly, 60 yards northerly, and 140 yards southerly.

Part VII - The Investigation

A review of the pilot's flight time and experience revealed that he was well qualified in this model aircraft and currently proficient. The estimated time of departure from Kirtland AFB was 1800, and the actual take off time was 1754 whereas time of sunset was 1731. This was in violation of ferry regulations as outlined in OpNav Inst 3710.6 paragraph 20, e (1), which states that flights shall be planned and carried out so that aircraft do not arrive at destination after local sunset or depart before local sunrise. A VFR flight plan was filed, however, the general weather and terrain conditions were not conducive to night VFR flight though points of departure and destination were VFR and forecast to remain so until arrival at destination. The weather in the area preceding the point of crash was 8000 ft. broken with a high overcast above that. There were no pilot reports available for the area in question but pilot reports from Wink, Texas to Cochise, Arizona showed that numerous cloud layers

ranged from 500 ft. scattered to 30,000 ft. overcast with turbulence throughout the area. The aircraft crashed on green 5 airways 2½ miles southwest of Columbus radio. Weather in this vicinity was 1500 ft. overcast with light rain.

The aircraft was completely demolished with minute particles scattered over a broad area. The pilot remained strapped in his seat with apparently no attempt at ejection, though this lack of attempt could not positively be determined. There was no evidence of malfunction of any sort, and verbal statements by citizens of Columbus, New Mexico were that the aircraft emerged from the cloud in a spin going straight down. The reliability of the statements that the aircraft was seen before crash was questioned due to darkness and light rain with a 1500 ft. overcast.

Part VIII - The Analysis

(b) (5)

[redacted]

(b) (5)

[redacted]

19

Statement of GCI Controller

0130Z, 29 January 1957

Navy jet 125184 called on channel 10 to any GCI station. I answered him immediately, but he said, "Stand by, I'm in a spin". I checked the scope right away, but there were no emergency modes reflected. We called Captain Belk at F-41 and also El Paso AMIS. At 0139Z (1839 MST) El Paso reported a crash 2 miles West of Columbus. We notified the State Police. Captain Belk said Navy jet 125184 took off from ABQ at 0054Z (1754 MST) VFR to El Paso. El Paso AMIS received word from Columbus Radio that the wreckage was that of an F-9F and that an open parachute was laying beside the plane, the pilot's remains were also found.

[redacted] (b) (6)

T/Sgt., 685th ACWRON

20

Encl (2)

HOURLY WEATHER SEQUENCES 28 JANUARY 1957.

```
1630M  ABQ 60⌀E120⌀60 085/38/23→↘10 982
       TCS 15⌀E80⌀/⊕30RW--  064/43/30↑10+20 SWU OMTNS W BD
       CUS E30⌀70⊕30R--  098/43/38 ↘↘8 RWU NNW
1655M  ELP -X E55⌀/⌀ 3BD↗20+25 D3

1730M  ABQ 50⌀120⌀/⌀60 088/37/19↘11 983
       TCS 15⌀40⌀E80⌀/⊕30 075/41/32 ↑10+20
       CUS 5⌀E20⌀40⌀70⊕20R--  105/42/36↘10
       ELP -X E55⌀/⌀3BD 077/56/35 →↗18 985 DI

1830M  ABQ 50⌀E120⌀/⊕60 102/34/20↘6 /987
       TCS 40⌀E80⌀/⊕20 088/39/32↗10+15 SWU OMTNS W
       CUS S1M15⊕10R-  132/38/36↘12
       ELP 55⌀/⌀8 096/52/36 ↘18 989 APPRNT FROPA 1800M
```

SUNSET AT ABQ 28 JANUARY 1957 ..... 1731M.

21

Encl (3)

AIRCRAFT CLEARANCE

(DELIVER DUPLICATE TO BASE OPERATIONS AT DESTINATION)

DATE: 1-28-57

A. OPERATIONS OFFICE: KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

AIRCRAFT SERIAL NO.: 125184

B. OCCUPANTS (State whether crew or passenger. List additional passengers on separate sheet and attach.)

DUTY	NAME AND INITIALS	GRADE	SERVICE NO.	ORGANIZATION	HOME STATION
PILOT IN COMMAND	WHEELER CA	LCDR	(b) (6)	USN	St. Louis

C. FLIGHT PLAN

RADIO CALL: NAVY Jet 25184

AIRCRAFT TYPE: F-9F-4

POINT OF DEPARTURE: KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE

BASE NAME OF DESTINATION: El Paso Int

ROUTE TO BE FLOWN

IFR	VFR	ALTITUDE	ROUTE	TO
	X	VFR	DT	Truth or Cons
	X	VFR	DT	Horrlaster Ranch
	X	VFR	DT	El Paso Int

MILEAGE: 250 NAUT. ETD: 1400

EST TRUE A/S: 340 KTS. ETE: 0+45

ALTERNATE: NR ETE TO ALTERNATE: NR

TRANS. FREQ. VHF: 18 Channel UHF

PILOT'S LAST NAME: WHEELER

FUEL ON BOARD: 2 HRS. 0 MIN.

INSTRUMENT RATING

NAVY	AIR FORCE	ARMY
SPECIAL PILOT	PILOT RATING	PILOT RATING
STANDARD PILOT X	INST. RATING	INST. RATING

DATE INSTRUMENT CARD EXPIRES: 10-2-57

DD FORM 365 FILED AT: NR DATE FILED: NR

HIGHEST RANK ON BOARD: 7

22

BRIEFED ON SWWC ADV #: _____

REMARKS

S____, T____, Q____, M____, R____, DC____, AC____, DP____, AP____, NP____, NEXT STOP____

TAKEOFF ROLL JET AIRCRAFT: 4100

PRESSURE ALTITUDE: 5430

RUNWAY TEMPERATURE: +20°C

C. Wheeler

(SIGNATURE OF PILOT)

D. WEATHER

EXISTING: DESTINATION ELP 1655M — X55 (D) / (D) 3BD 320 TIME OF OBS

ALTERNATE NIR TIME OF OBS

FORECAST: DESTINATION (ETA) ELP 500 (D) / (D) 3BD 320 E

ALTERNATE (ETA) NIR

ROUTE FORECAST: MIN CIG 5000 FT ELP; MAX CLD TOPS 25000 FT MSL; MIN VIS FLT LVL 10; OBST OF NOTE ELP; MIN FRZ LVL 6000 FT MSL; ICING Light Mod Rime; WINDS 160 OMSL 35 20

THUNDERSTORMS; TURB Light Mod; HAIL; SNOW; RAIN; FOG; FRZ RAIN; SNOW; BRIEFING VOID AFTER 1235Z

SIGNATURE: S/Sgt Balston

E. FLIGHT CLEARANCE AUTHORIZATION

SUBMITTED TO: FLT SER TIME: 1135 BY: [illegible]

INSTRUCTIONS AND APPROVAL TRANS. TO TOWER OR PILOT BY: ATC

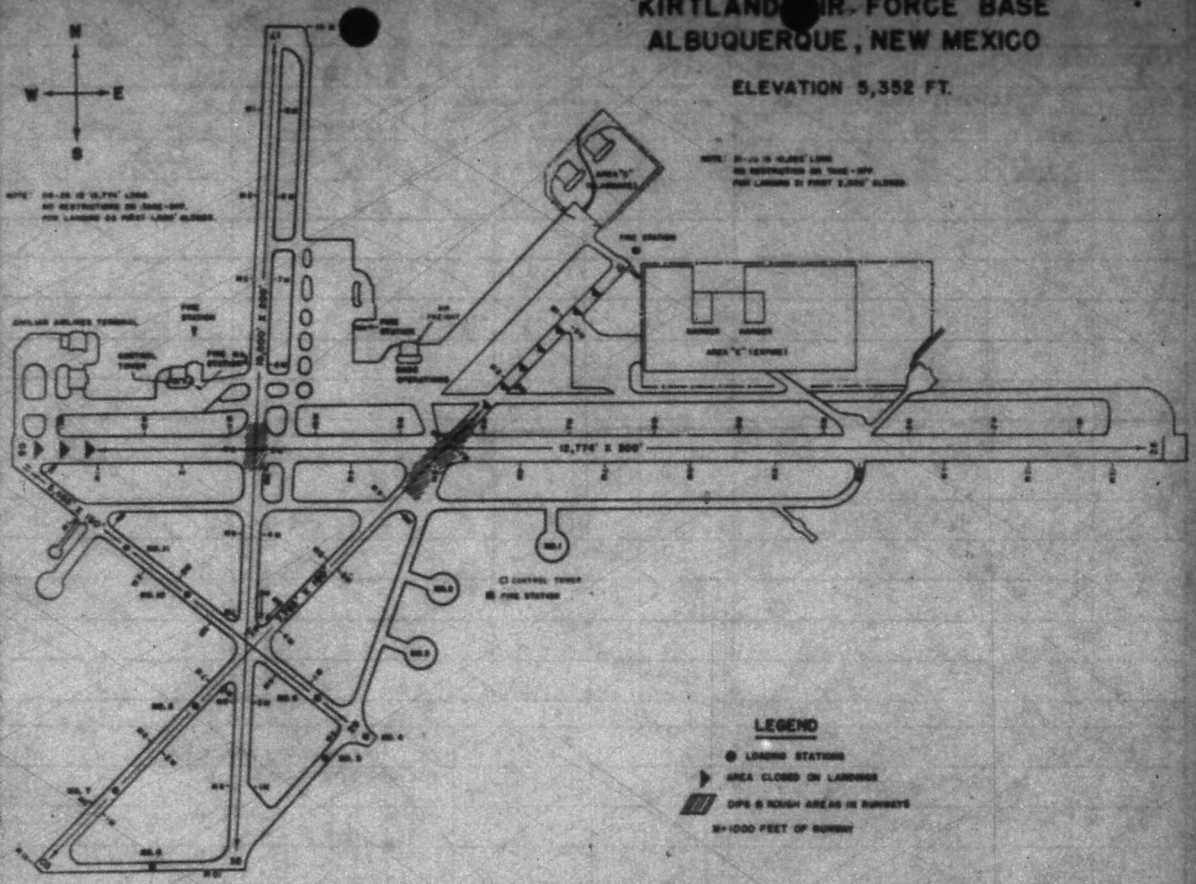
STATION ARRIVED AT: ALERT TIME: NAME: AMIS

SIGNATURE OF CLEARING AUTHORITY: (b) (6)

D FORM 1 MAY 54 175 PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF THIS FORM ARE OBSOLETE AND MAY BE USED UNTIL EXHAUSTED

KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

ELEVATION 5,352 FT.



CONTROL TOWER
C.A.A. OPERATED

VHF - 121.5 - 126.15 Mc
UHF - 257.6 - 243.0 Mc
HF - 278T - 3023.5R - 230T

APPROACH CONTROL

VHF - 121.5 - 126.15 - 110.3 Mc
UHF - 257.6 - 243.0 Mc
HF - 230T - 3023.5R

JET BARRIER AVAILABLE RUNWAY 26 ON PILOT REQUEST TO TOWER

PILOT TO FORECASTER
VHF - 137.96 Mc

UHF/DF
305.4 - 257.6 Mc

VHF/DF
VHF - 121.5 - 126.15 Mc

ADC RADAR STATIONS
VHF - 121.5 Mc
UHF - 243.0 Mc

GCI CONTROL
CARROT
CHANNEL 10

ENCL (1) PHOTO NO 1

ENCL (1) PHOTO NO 2

ENCL (1) PHOTO NO3

ENCL #0 (1) PHOTO NO. 4

L/H OUTER WING PANEL
VIEW - RIGHT SIDE UP
LEADING EDGE SIDE

ENCL (1) PHOTO NO. 5

L/H OUTER WING PANEL
VIEW - RIGHT SIDE UP
LEADING EDGE SIDE

ENCL (1) PHOTO NO. 5

BELIEVE TO BE TRAILING EDGE
SECT. OF R/H WING PANEL

ENCL (1) PHOTO NO. 6

MEDICAL OFFICERS REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS AND GROUND ACCIDENTS

OPNAV FORM-3750.8 (REV. 2-54)
(Supersedes OPNAV Form-3750-22)

OPNAV REPORT-3750

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. This report shall be filed in the event of an aircraft accident/incident which involves one or more of the following:

   Death / Ditching
   Injury, Water Crash
   Bail-out or Ejection (attempted or successful)
   Wherever physiological or psychological factors are involved
   Aircraft Ground Accidents resulting in serious injury

2. Completion of the form shall be the responsibility of the flight surgeon
3. For type accident and damage code refer to OPNAV INSTRUCTION 3750.6A.
4. This form shall be prepared in quadruplicate. One copy shall be turned over to the Aircraft Accident Board (or the Survival and Intelligence Officer in the case of combat incidents), and the original shall be air mailed (regular mail within 250 miles of Washington, D.C.) direct to Chief of Naval Operations (OP-57) Navy Department, Washington 25, D.C. within 4 working days following the accident. The third copy shall be mailed direct to Safety Equipment Branch, BUAER, Navy Department, Washington 25, D.C. The fourth copy shall be forwarded direct via air mail (regular mail within 250 miles of Norfolk, Va.) to the U.S. Naval Aviation Safety Activity, Naval Air Station, Norfolk 11, Virginia. Where more than one aircraft is involved, separate forms must be completed for each aircraft wherein one or more of the requirements in paragraph 1. above are applicable. (Additional copies may be prepared for use of squadron flight surgeons and other interested individuals)

1. FROM (Ship or station address)	2. SERIAL NO.	3. ACCIDENT OCCURRED (Geographic location)	4. TIME (Local)	5. DATE
U. S. Naval Air Station, NI, San Diego, Calif.	MD 1-57	Columbus, New Mexico	1830	1/28/57

6. PLANE COVERED BY THIS REPORT	MODEL	BU. NO.	NO. OCCUPANTS	UNIT OPERATING AIRCRAFT	TYPE ACCIDENT	DAMAGE
	F9F4	125184	1	NAS, St. Louis, Missouri	A	A
7. OTHER PLANE (if involved)	MODEL	BU. NO.	NO. OCCUPANTS	UNIT OPERATING AIRCRAFT		DAMAGE

8. NAME OF PILOT IN CONTROL OF AIRCRAFT AT TIME OF ACCIDENT/INCIDENT (Last, first, middle): WHEELER, Chester A.

UNIT PILOT ATTACHED TO: NAS, St. Louis, Missouri

9. FLIGHT SURGEON'S CHECK LIST: [X] ALL PARTS OF FORM COMPLETED [ ] SURVIVORS NARRATIVES [X] PHOTOS AS NEEDED [ ] RECOMMENDATIONS [X] COPIES FURNISHED

10. REPORT FILED BY: [redacted] (b) (6) CAPT, MC USN — SIGNATURE: [redacted] (b) (6) — DATE: 2/7/57

11. FORWARDED: USN USMC COMMANDING — SIGNATURE — DATE

12. [X] AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT [ ] AIRCRAFT INCIDENT [ ] COMBAT INCIDENT [ ] GROUND ACCIDENT

13. ACCIDENT DESCRIPTION

INCLUDE HERE A PARAGRAPH GIVING A BRIEF BUT FACTUAL ACCOUNT DESCRIBING THE ACCIDENT/INCIDENT. INCLUDE SUCH CAUSES AS KNOWN, ESTIMATES OF "G" FORCES, ANGLES OF IMPACT, SPEED ON IMPACT, ATTITUDE ON IMPACT, ETC. ATTACH PHOTOGRAPHS WHEN PERTINENT.

See Enclosure

30

14. PILOT FACTORS (Check pertinent pilot factors listed below)

	PILOT	CO-PILOT		PILOT	CO-PILOT
IN CONTROL AT TIME OF ACCIDENT/INCIDENT	X		HYPOXIA SUSPECTED	Unk.	
AMOUNT OF FLIGHT TIME IN LAST 24 HOURS	1.2		CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING SUSPECTED	Unk.	
NUMBER OF FLIGHTS IN LAST 24 HOURS	1		FAULTY VISION	Unk.	
NUMBER HOURS DUTY IN LAST 24 HOURS	?		AEROEMBOLISM	Unk.	
HOURS SINCE LAST FULL MEAL	?		BLACKOUT, GREYOUT, REDOUT	Unk.	
TIME AT CONTROLS THIS FLIGHT	1.2		VERTIGO	Unk.	
TOTAL FLIGHT TIME	2345.5	252	NIGHT BLINDNESS	Unk.	
TOTAL FLIGHT TIME IN MODEL	493.7		FATIGUE	Unk.	
NUMBER PREVIOUS ACCIDENTS	?		DOMESTIC DIFFICULTIES	Unk.	
DATE OF LAST ACCIDENT	?		UNFAMILIARITY IN TYPE AIRCRAFT	Unk.	
NUMBER DAYS GROUNDED IN LAST MONTH	?		ANXIETY REACTION	Unk.	
DATE LAST LOW PRESSURE INDOCTRINATION	?		LAST CER (date and score)	Unk.	
AMOUNT SLEEP IN LAST 24 HOURS	?		OTHER PERTINENT FACTORS IN ACCIDENT (describe below)		

15. COMMENTS ON ITEMS CHECKED UNDER ITEM 14 WHICH ARE PERTINENT TO ACCIDENT/INCIDENT. WHERE APPLICABLE, COMMENT BELOW ON ANY OF THE ABOVE FACTORS AFFECTING CREW MEMBERS OR PASSENGERS

See Enclosure

SUMMARIES OF SAFETY EQUIPMENT, INJURIES AND CAUSE

DIRECTIONS

1. Use separate form for each person.
2. Under Injury Class, use following key:

Class "A" Fatal injury, is considered for reporting procedure as one that results in death prior to submission of the Aircraft Accident Report.
Class "B" Critical injury is considered for reporting procedure as injury which threatens to result in death either from injuries sustained in the accident or from complications thereof. Critical injuries resulting in death within 30 days shall be reported by letter to the original addressees.
Class "C" Serious injury is considered for reporting procedure as injury less than critical but definitely requiring five or more days hospitalization involving medical treatment but from which the individual will be expected to recover. Unsuspected critical conditions or complications erroneously listed in this category which result in death within 30 days shall be reported by letter to the original addressees.
Class "D" Minor injury is considered for reporting procedure as any injury less than serious.
Class "E" No injury.
Class "L" Unknown injury - lost and presumed drowned.
Class "M" Unknown injury - missing.

3. Under disposition, use following key:
"E" - Uninjured
"G" - grounded
"W" - treated and returned to duty
"X" - hospitalized
"Y" - remains recovered
"Z" - remains not recovered

1. NAME	2. FILE NO.	3. RANK/RATE	4. AGE	5. WEIGHT	6. HEIGHT
WHEELER, Chester A.	[redacted] (b) (6)	LCDR	35	Unk.	Unk.

7. DUTY ABOARD PLANE, ON DECK/GROUND	8. POSITION OCCUPIED AT TIME OF ACCIDENT	9. INJURY CLASS.	10. DISPOSITION
Pilot	Cockpit	A	Y

11. SAFETY EQUIPMENT	MODEL/TYPE	AVAILABLE	USED	NOT USED	DAMAGED	LOST
SHOULDER HARNESS						
LAP BELT						
INERTIA REEL	S					
"G" SUIT	E					
HELMET	E					
OXYGEN MASK	A					
GOGGLES	D					
SHOES (type)		D				
FLIGHT SUIT, OTHER THAN "G" (type)		E				
EXPOSURE SUIT (type)		N				
OTHER (specify)		D				

WAS OXYGEN BEING USED AT TIME OF ACCIDENT UNKNOWN ☐ YES ☐ NO

PREOXYGENATION UNKNOWN ☐ YES ☐ NO

IF YES, OXYGEN SUPPLY PRESSURE PRIOR TO FLIGHT ____ PSI AT TIME OF ACCIDENT UNKNOWN ____ PSI

WAS OXYGEN EQUIPMENT PRE-FLIGHTED BY PILOT ☐ YES ☐ NO

IF SHOULDER HARNESS USED	LOCKED	UNLOCKED	TIGHT	SLACK
	UNKNOWN			

☐ PRESSED FORWARD AGAINST HARNESS ☐ PRESSED AGAINST SEAT BACK

ON IMPACT	SAFETY BELT	LOCKED	TIGHT	SLACK
		UNKNOWN		

12. COMMENT ON EFFECTIVENESS (Entries of "No," "None," "as designed," etc., will not be accepted. If any equipment failed, describe failure and probable cause. Use additional sheet, if necessary.

IN CASE OF BURNS, FREEZING, OR FROSTBITE, LIST ALL CLOTHING WORN. USE ADDITIONAL SHEET, IF NECESSARY.

13. POST CRASH EXAMINATION

IF DEAD, LIST PRIMARY CAUSE (multiple extreme, so state)
[redacted] (b) (6)

INTERNAL INJURIES

AUTOPSY FINDINGS, IF PERFORMED
NOT PERFORMED

IF HOSPITALIZED, GIVE DIAGNOSIS

PLACE

ESTIMATED LENGTH OF HOSPITALIZATION

LIST PRE-EXISTING PHYSICAL DEFECTS PRESENT AT TIME OF POST CRASH EXAMINATION (as condition permits)

CARBON MONOXIDE-NAME COHO TEST-RESULTS

IF GROUNDED, REASON

ESTIMATED LENGTH OF GROUNDING

14. INJURIES

[redacted] (b) (6)

15. CAUSE OF INJURIES (Give opinion as to cause of each injury indicated above. Give specific parts of aircraft involved. Entries of "No," "None," "Sustained on impact," or "Undetermined" with no amplification will not be accepted. Use additional sheet, if necessary.)

Complete disintegration of body due to impact, explosion and fire.

PAGE 1 - ITEM 13

F9F cleared VFR, Albuquerque for El Paso Jan. 28, 1957 at 1754 MST. The GCI station at Las Cruces, N.M. received message "Am in spin, stand by." A half hour later the same unit was notified by phone that a plane had crashed in a desert area about two miles SW of Columbus, N. M. One man claimed to have seen plane go in. Time was after dark and overcast was at 15 hundred feet. As angle of descent was almost vertical time of observation was very short. Witness could give no details. [redacted] (b) (5) [redacted] (b) (5) [redacted] (b) (5) [redacted] The aircraft was completely demolished. [redacted] (b) (5) [redacted] (b) (5) [redacted] Aircraft was on a ferry flight from Albuquerque to El Paso.

PAGE I ITEM 15

NAS ST LOUIS has been requested to forward available information on items in paragraph 14. A copy of flight plan has been requested from Kirtland AFB. but has not been received. It is known that the flight was VFR Kirtland AFB to El Paso, estimated duration of flight 0.75 hours. The CAA aerologist at Columbus, New Mexico [redacted] (b) (5) [redacted] (b) (5) [redacted] (b) (5) [redacted] (b) (5) [redacted] The weather was marginal with overcast at 1500 feet and broken clouds with tops up to 12000-16000 feet. [redacted] (b) (5) [redacted] (b) (5) [redacted]

(b) (5), (b) (6)

[redacted]

PAGE 2 ITEMS 11 AND 12

/Due to complete destruction of aircraft by impact, explosion and fire no estimate can be made of the effectiveness of safety equipment. [redacted]

(b) (5), (b) (6)

[redacted]

(b) (6)

[redacted]