

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION
A-10, S/N 82-0655
SPANGDAHLEM AB, GERMANY
27 JUNE 2002

On 27 June 2002, at 14:35 local time, an A-10 aircraft, S/N 82-0655, crashed near Domptail, France. The A-10, assigned to the 81st Fighter Squadron (FS), 52d Fighter Wing, Spangdahlem Air Base (AB), Germany, was flying a Tactical Leadership Program (TLP) syllabus sortie from Florennes AB, Belgium. The mishap pilot (MP) from the 81 FS was fatally injured in the mishap.

The MP was flying his sixth TLP training sortie and the mission was syllabus sortie number 12, Threat Feedback 2, on the Polygone Electronic Warfare Range in France. Mission planning, briefing, start, taxi, takeoff, holding, low level routing were all normal and the weather was good. On the final portion of the mission, enroute to the target, the mishap aircraft (MA) was illuminated by a threat radar and in the course of a defensive reaction, impacted the ground.

The primary cause of the mishap was the MP mis-prioritized his tasks and failed to properly execute a descent to 500ft AGL during his defensive maneuver. While inbound to the target the MP was illuminated at first by an air-to-air threat followed approximately fifteen seconds later by a surface-to-air threat. At approximately 1500ft AGL, while executing his defensive maneuver, the pilot mis-prioritized his actions and channelized his attention inside the cockpit to determine his position; in the process, the MA attained a 32 degrees nose low attitude. Late recognition of this excessive nose low attitude resulted in the MP attempting to recover the aircraft at approximately 440ft AGL, but this was too late to avoid controlled flight into the terrain.

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.