

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

**KC-135R, SERIAL NUMBER (S/N) 63-8025**  
**351<sup>ST</sup> EXPEDITIONARY AIR REFUELING SQUADRON**  
**1 APRIL 2003**

On 1 April 2003, at 1530 local time (1230 Zulu), a KC-135R, S/N 63-8025, experienced a nose landing gear collapse at RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus. The KC-135R, assigned to the 351<sup>st</sup> Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron, 401<sup>st</sup> Air Expeditionary Wing, RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus, was to be part of a planned air refueling mission in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.

Prior to flight, as the mishap pilot (MP) pressurized the aircraft's left hydraulic system, the nose gear inadvertently retracted thus, allowing the nose of the aircraft and the two inboard engine nacelles to come in contact with the ground. The MP, mishap copilot (MCP), and mishap boom operator, egressed safely from the aircraft without injury. The damage resulted in an estimated loss of \$2,100,437.86. There were no deaths, injuries, or property damage as the result of the mishap.

The Guidance and Control Systems technician (MT1) failed to lower the landing gear lever in accordance with technical order guidance following routine maintenance. The MCP, failed to verify that the landing gear lever was in the down, in detent, position as part of the copilot Interior Inspection checklist in accordance with technical order guidance. The AIB President found the mishap was a result of these two inactions.

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 by the United States or by any person referred to in those conclusions or statements.