EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION, B-1B, S/N 86-0132
9th BOMB SQUADRON, 7th BOMB WING, AIR COMBAT COMMAND

FORWARD OPERATING AREA
8 MAY 2006

On 8 May 2006, at 2220 Local Time (1620 Zulu), B-1B, Serial Number 86-0132, landed with its landing gear retracted at a Forward Operating Area (FOA). The B-1B and the Mishap Crew (MC) are assigned to the 7th Bomb Wing, Dyess Air Force Base (AFB), Texas and deployed as the 9th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron. The MC egressed the Mishap Aircraft (MA) safely. The Mishap Copilot (MCP) suffered a minor back injury. The rest of the MC was not injured. There was no damage to private property. Damage to the MA was estimated at $7.9 million, while damage to the runway was estimated at $14,025.55.

The Mishap Flight was a two-ship over-water navigation mission with another B-1B in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. The objective of the sortie was for the mishap aircraft to lead the flight, supported by air-to-air refueling, from Andersen AFB, Guam to the FOA.

While the MA was on its final landing approach, the Mishap Pilot (MP) unexpectedly turned over aircraft control to the MCP. The MP reported to the Air Traffic Control Tower that the landing gear was down despite the fact that the *Descent/Before Landing Checklist* was never completed and the landing gear was never lowered. The red warning light in the gear handle, indicating all landing gear was not down and locked, was illuminated for over four minutes during the approach. Additionally, at the time the aircraft landed, the three green gear position lights, which illuminate after the landing gear has locked in the down position, were not illuminated.

After a careful and complete investigation, the Accident Investigation Board President found clear and convincing evidence that the cause of the mishap was both pilots' failure to lower the landing gear during the mishap aircraft's approach and landing. There is no evidence of a mechanical failure being a factor in the mishap. Contributing factors for the pilots' failure to lower the MA's landing gear, supported by substantial evidence, were the MCP's task oversaturation; the MCP's urgency to complete a long mission sortie; both pilots' inattention to instrument readings and the *Descent/Before Landing Checklist*, and the MCP's false belief that the landing gear was extended.

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.