

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
T-38C, S/N 65-10372
ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BOARD
COLUMBUS AFB, MISSISSIPPI
23 April 2008

On 23 April 2008, at approximately 1226 Central Standard Time, the Mishap Aircraft (MA), a T-38C, S/N 65-10372, with an experienced instructor and student pilot on board, crashed during initial takeoff at Columbus AFB, MS. The MA was assigned to the 50th Flying Training Squadron.

After a comprehensive investigation into this mishap, the Board President found that, by clear and convincing evidence, the right aileron of the MA failed in the full down position prior to takeoff. This condition resulted in an uncommanded left roll as the aircraft was rotating for takeoff. Initial correction was made momentarily reducing the left bank. However, as airspeed continued to increase, the left roll continued until the MA was completely inverted. Given the mechanical failure and the critical phase of flight, the pilots were unable to maintain control of the aircraft. The MA became inverted within 3 to 4 seconds and struck the ground, sliding off the runway and bursting into flames, destroying the aircraft. Collateral damage was limited to ground scarring adjacent to the runway. Neither pilot was able to successfully eject and both were killed due to ground impact.

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.