

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

F-15E, S/N 87-0200

SEYMOUR JOHNSON AIR FORCE BASE, NC

4 April 2001

On 4 April 2001, at 2058 EST (0058 Zulu), an F-15E, S/N 87-0200, call sign Jester 32, impacted a flock of birds 10 miles east of Point Kilo, North Carolina, on VR1758. The F-15E, assigned to the 334th Fighter Squadron, 4th Fighter Wing, Seymour Johnson AFB, was part of a formal course student Surface Attack Training (SAT-3) mission. The mishap pilot and mishap instructor weapons systems operator, of the 334th Fighter Squadron, flew the aircraft back to Seymour Johnson AFB using only the left engine, with the right engine still burning. Neither crewmember sustained injuries.

Based on clear and convincing evidence, this accident was caused by a flock of 20-22 Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*), as evidenced by the aircraft's FLIR image 1-2 seconds prior to impact. The aircraft impacted 17 Lesser Scaup at N3559 W7713 on a heading of 110 degrees at 450 knots and 650 feet AGL. The right engine catastrophically failed, causing an engine fire that lasted for the duration of the flight. The left engine was damaged beyond repair, yet returned the aircraft and crew to Seymour Johnson AFB. Additional damage occurred to the right conformal fuel tank (CFT), left ramp, navigation pod, targeting pod, left side of the canopy bow, and panels 47L and 155L.

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.