

**59-0084**

25 Apr 73

49<sup>th</sup> FIS



Major Aircraft Accident -  
F-106A SN 59-084  
25 April 1973, 2136 EST

HISTORY OF FLIGHT

On the evening of 25 April 1973, a combined High Altitude/Air Refueling/Low Altitude Intercept mission was flown in a flight of three F-106 aircraft with the following aircrews participating: Captain Miller, Kilo Hotel 17, (Flight Lead); Captain Roehrkasse, Kilo Hotel 04; 1/Lt Davis, Kilo Hotel 21. Daily Flight Authorization/Clearance Form, (49th FIS Form 85), was utilized for flight authorization. 1/Lt Davis was assigned Aircraft 59-084, configured with external tanks, one MSR and two WSEM's.

BRIEFING: The general squadron briefing began at 1600 EST with Capt Little, B Flight Commander giving the briefing. The original schedule called for four F-106's to takeoff at 1800 EST. They were to run high altitude intercepts for approximately 1 hour, descend and refuel with a locally based KC-135, call sign Face 62, in AR-609. After completion of the refueling, they would descend into low level "A" for low altitude intercepts on a squadron T-33 equipped with chaff and ECM. They were briefed to use a look down technique for target acquisition on the low altitude intercept. The second flight of four aircraft on the original schedule were to take-off at 1900 EST, practice low altitude intercepts for approximately 1 hour, climb to the refueling area as mentioned above, and then continue on to the high altitude area for high altitude intercepts after the refueling was completed. Prior to the formal briefing, the briefing officer was informed that there would only be four aircraft available for the mission. The mission was briefed for two aircraft on the first "go", and two aircraft on the second. The briefing covered enroute, arrival, and alternate weather; NOTAMS, aircraft assignments and locations; general overview of the mission, emergency procedures, and other applicable items as indicated by ADCM 51-106. Since the restrictions for low level and formation flight had recently been removed, Capt Kozlowicz, the squadron training officer, briefed low altitude and formation procedures IAW ADCR 51-6 and ADCM 51-1, along with a refueling briefing. He also included in his portion of the briefing, night emergency signals, as per AFM 51-1. Shortly after the briefing was concluded, one of the aircraft on the first "go" was called out of commission and pilots were notified of the change. The single aircraft now on the first flight, (1/Lt Davis in 084), was moved back to the 1900 takeoff with the two aircraft, (Capt Miller in 59-080 and Capt Roehrkasse in 59-069). Since this was a change to the original briefing, Capt Little gave them another short general briefing concerning the change in aircraft lineup. Capt Miller, the flight lead, then took his two wingmen aside and gave them a thorough briefing on their departure, formation, intercept, air refueling and recovery procedures. He also briefed a three ship departure with KH 17 and 04 making a wing takeoff with KH 21 taking spacing and rejoining on the turn out of traffic.

PREFLIGHT, TAXI AND TAKEOFF: Lt Davis reported to his aircraft 35 minutes prior to the scheduled 1900 EST takeoff in accordance with 49FIS local operating procedures.

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The decision was made to let the "end of runway" crew try to fix the canopy problem. When this was not successful, KH 21 taxied back into the 49th parking area where maintenance was able to fix the canopy problem. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] He also called "pins, canopy, pressure and breaker" after being cleared for takeoff. KH 21 tookoff at 1920 EST, eighteen minutes behind KH 17 and 04.

FLIGHT: KH 17, 04 and 21 practiced snap-up attacks from 35,000' to 45,000' for approximately one hour, then rejoined with KH 17 for a three-ship formation descent for the air refueling portion of the mission in AR-609. The refueling portion of the flight was accomplished with no problems by the three flight members. Each aircraft was topped-off prior to departing the tanker with KH 21 being the last aircraft to receive fuel. A descent was then made into low level "ALPHA" for the low altitude intercepts. The T-33 was not in the area yet, so Incognito Control designated KH 04 as the target for the first intercept with a command altitude of 6,000'. Both interceptors completed their passes with MA's and no apparent problems. At this time, the T-33 arrived in the low altitude training area at 7,500' and was told by Incognito to descend to 6,000' as he was to be the next target. The interceptors were positioned 2,000' high at 8,000' as on the first pass against KH 04. KH 21 was the first aircraft paired on Ament 06, the target. He rolled into the stern with an initial contact call of 240/4. Incognito confirmed that was his target. KH 17 was following him in on target and rolled out in trail of KH 21 approximately 3-4 miles. KH 21 was still holding in trail of the target so Incognito sent KH 17 to 9,000' for altitude separation. These relative positions were held for a short period of time with KH 17 calling tally-ho on KH 21, at two different times. Shortly thereafter, Ament 06, KH 04 and 17 observed an explosion with accompanying fire on the ground a few miles in front of KH 17. It was suspected that KH 21 had crashed and that was shortly verified. The three aircraft orbited the crash scene for approximately one hour then returned to Griffiss AFB, N.Y. None of the orbiting aircraft heard any distress calls from KH 21 prior to the crash or heard a beacon after the crash.

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