

44-98-213

176

TECHNICAL REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE

- (1) The Accident Classification Committee of 43rd Bomb Group (H) met on 12 September 1943 and determined the following:
- (2) Place, date, and time of accident Jackson, APO 929 0421, 8 September, 1943
- (3) Aircraft station Jackson Org. 403rd Bomb Sq
- (4) Aircraft model B24D A. C. No. 240682
- (5) Date accepted from contractor Unknown
- (6) Total hours 295.3 Hours since overhaul New
- (7) Engine model R1830-43
- (8) Engine A. C. No.'s 41013776 L42-85869 R42-85942 R42-85983
- (9) Extent of damage to engine(s) L. O. Salva L. I. Salva R. I. Salva R. O. Salva
- (10) Total engine hours L. O. 532.2 L. I. 295.3 R. I. 295.3 R. O. 295.3
- (11) Engine hours since overhaul L. O. 44.2 L. I. --- R. I. --- R. O. ---
- (12) Purpose of flight Recon Mission
- (13) Took off from Jackson Time 0400
- (14) Weather at time of accident. (If weather was a causal factor attach copies of weather report and forecast for the flight.) 3 Stratocumulus, 3000 ft, Calm; Vis 2 miles, Light Ground Fog
- (15) Pilot (name and rank) Howard J. Wood, F/O
- (16) Pilot's station Jackson, APO 929
- (17) Reg. Army Res., ext. duty Res., inactive Res., 14-day Grad. cadet Student Other (specify) A. U. S.
- (18) Org.—assigned 403rd Bomb Sq (H)
- (19) Org.—attached for flying
- (20) Regular duties assigned None
- (21) Original pilot rating and date 4 January, 1943
- (22) Total pilot hours 628.0 Hours on this model 420.7
- (23) Hours per month last 3 months 96.8 (1) 58.3 (2) 24.7 (3) 13.8
- (24) Models flown last 3 months (1) B24D (2) B24D (3) B24D
- (25) Secure from Flight Surgeon, if pilot error is a causal factor: Was there any physical or neuropsychic condition which would in any way account for this accident? Yes or No. NO. If "Yes", attach complete statement of the condition and its bearing upon the accident.
- (26) Damage to private property: Yes or No. NO. If "Yes", attach A. C. Form No. 1, "Damage to property certificate."

RESULTS TO PERSONNEL

DUTY	Name, rank, and Army status, as: Regular Army, Res. ext., Res. inact., etc.	IN COLUMN "DUTY" ENTER SYMBOLS AS FOLLOWS:				Fatal	Major injury	Minor injury	No injury	Used parachute	PER-SONNEL ERROR	PILOT ERROR	OTHER PER-SONNEL	POWER PLANT	MATE-RIEL	AIR-CRAFT STRUC-TURE	MIN-CELLA-NEOUS	CAUSES
		C—Commander	P—Pilot	CP—Co-pilot	OB—Observer													
01 P	Howard J. Wood, F/O, AUS					X	✓											For of judgment, Poor technique, Disobedience of orders, Carelessness or negligence, Miscellaneous,
04 CP	Howard R. Thomas, 1st Lt, EAD					X	✓											Supervisory personnel, Maintenance personnel, Other personnel,
05 N	Ralph M. Hart, 2nd Lt, EAD					X	✓											Fuel system, Cooling system, Ignition system, Lubrication system, Engine structure, Propeller and propeller accessories, Engine control system, Miscellaneous (specify),
06 B	Robert G. McDonald, 2nd Lt, EAD					X	✓											Undetermined, Flight control system, Movable surfaces, Stabilizing surfaces; struts, wires, and fittings, Wings; struts, wires, and fittings, Landing gear; struts, wires, fittings, and retract. mech., Wheels, tires, and brakes, Fuselage, engine mount and fittings, Cowling, fairing, and fittings, Tail wheel assembly and skid, Miscellaneous (specify),
07 E	Charles P. Seip, T/Sgt., RA					X	✓											Undetermined,
08 AE	John Krymak, S/Sgt., AUS					X	✓											Handling qualities, Instruments, Miscellaneous equipment (specify),
09 R	Hyman Silverstein, T/Sgt., AUS					X	✓											Weather, Darkness, Airport or terrain, Other, Undetermined,
10 AR	Joel L. Herndon, S/Sgt., AUS					X	✓											
11 G	Donald F. Wilcott, S/Sgt., AUS					X	✓											
12 G	Samuel M. Wilkinson, S/Sgt., AUS					X	✓											
13 V	Samuel B. White, Sgt., RA					X	✓											
14	AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY HQ (NUMBER UNKNOWN)					X	✓											

(28) PILOT'S STATEMENT (state how the accident occurred, giving all details as to conditions, causes, and influencing factors):

RESTRICTED

Signature ..... Pilot.

(29) STATEMENT OF ACCIDENT CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE (give complete causal statement, amplifying the pilot's statement where necessary to explain the causes):

SEE ATTACHED LETTER FOR STATEMENT OF ACCIDENT CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE.

(30) RECOMMENDATIONS:

Each member of the Committee has read and understands A. C. Circular No. 15-14, A. R. 95-120, and N. A. C. A. Report No. 570.

The above statement and recommendations, and the classification and analysis shown on the reverse hereof, are the consensus of opinion of this Committee.

Signed	<i>Jay P. Reusek</i>	MAJOR	PRESIDENT
Signed	<i>Jean A. Jack</i>	MAJOR	MEMBER
Signed	<i>John A. Robertson</i>	CAPTAIN	MEMBER

(31) REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (accomplish only if this report is initiated at other than the home station):

Station ..... Date ..... Signature .....

(32) REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

ENCLOSURES (line cut those not applicable):

- Airplane (Airship) Flight Report.
- Certificates of principal witnesses.

Station ... A.P.O. 929 ..... Date 19 September, 1943

Signature *Harry J. Hawthorne*  
 HARRY J. HAWTHORNE, Lt. COL. Commanding.

**SECRET**

7 September, 1943

Jackson, APO 929

43rd Bomb Gp (H)

B24D1

STATION

GROUP NO. AND TYPE

AIRPLANE MODEL

"RESTRICTED"

Charles P. Seip, T/Sgt

403rd Bomb Sq (H)

SQUADRON NO. AND TYPE

240682

OR AERIAL ENGINEER

AIRPLANE SERIAL NO

PERS CLASS	NAME - RANK - ORGANIZATION	USE AS DIRECTED LOCALLY	ALWAYS ENTER DUTY SYMBOLS WHEN APPLICABLE. ENTER TIME FLOWN THEREUNDER				TERMINALS AND MISSION	FLIGHT DATA
			DUTY IN OR 1	DUTY IN OR 2	DUTY IN OR 3	DUTY IN OR 4		
17	T-252 Wood, Howard J. F/O	CM					JACKSON 04 20	
01	0-790734 Thomas, Howard R. 1st Lt		CP				Crash 04 21	
01	0-674188 Hart, Ralph M. 2nd Lt		N				R 0	
01	0-738996 McDonald, Robert G. 2nd Lt		B					
20	7033077 Seip, Charles P. T/Sgt		E					
38	33345669 Brynak, John. S/Sgt		AE					
38	31201941 Silverstein, Hyman T/Sgt		P					
38	34082449 Herndon, Joel L. S/Sgt		AR					
38	16075243 Wilcott, Donald F. S/Sgt		G					
38	33277954 Wilkinson, Samuel M. S/Sgt		G					
20	14044815 White, Samuel B. Sgt		V					
ALL KILLED								
THIS IS A TRUE COPY								
<i>Dennis J. Lombardi</i> DENNIS J. LOMBARDI, Capt., Air Corps, Adjutant.								

WAR DEPARTMENT FORM NO. 1 TENTATIVE-12-18-41

CHECKED: LEGIBLE AND CORRECT

TRANSCRIBED: TOTAL FLIGHT TIME ENTERED ON FORM 1

OPER CLERK

CREW CHIEF

TOTAL FLIGHT TIME

FLIGHT REPORT - OPERATIONS

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

HEADQUARTERS  
FORTY THIRD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) "RESTRICTED" VPB/joc  
OFFICE OF THE ORDNANCE OFFICER

"RESTRICTED"

APO 929,  
10 Sept., 1943.

SUBJECT: Cause of Detonation of Fuzed Bombs in Airplane Crash.

TO : Commanding Officer, 43rd Bombardment Group (H), APO 929.

1. A B-24 airplane of the 403rd Bombardment Squadron, 43rd Bombardment Group crashed just beyond the end of the runway at Jackson Drome, at approximately 0430 hours on the morning of 8 Sept., 1943.

2. The plane carried four (4) 500# Demolition bombs with AN M103 nose fuzes and AN M101A1 tail fuzes, .025 sec. delay. The bombs were fuzed and the safety pins were in the fuzes.

3. Witnesses stated that the bombs exploded within a few seconds of the crash.

4. An investigation by the writer showed that the bombs exploded with a high order detonation by impact with the ground and not by the fire that resulted. The plane struck the ground on the side of a slope and there was some burned wreckage at this point. At a point about ten (10) yards farther up the hill near the top, there were three craters from five (5) to eight (8) yards apart and about ten (10) yards from more burned wreckage. There was no burned wreckage at the point where the bombs exploded.

5. The fourth bomb laying on the top of the hill not far from the craters had an armed nose fuze in it, having had the cap retaining the safety blocks knocked off. The tail fuze had the stem broken off but the part holding the inertia slug was in place and this fuze was not in an armed condition. The shear wire had not been broken in the nose fuze and both fuzes were removed by the writer.

6. It is the opinion of the writer that on impact with the ground, the bombs broke through the wreckage knocking off the caps of the nose fuzes that retain the safety blocks. On tumbling and rolling for the next few seconds, the striker head of three of them hit the ground and detonated the bombs. The striking head in the fuze of the fourth bomb did not hit the ground.

*Vincent P. Berger*  
VINCENT P. BERGER,  
Capt., Ord. Dept.,  
Ordnance Officer.

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"RESTRICTED"

STATEMENT OF ACCIDENT CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE

After due investigation and interrogation of witnessing personnel the committee arrived at the following conclusion.

Pilot Wood undertook the fateful take-off under instrument conditions and failed to climb to a sufficient altitude before lowering the nose of the aircraft to increase the airspeed. Going directly from contact to instrument flying in B-24 aircraft, immediately after take-off is trying, on the best of pilots, for flight instruments can very easily give erratic readings at the moment the aircraft becomes airborne.

Witnessing personnel stated that the take-off was normal in all respects up to the time the ship began to descend.

At approximately 1000 yards from the S.E. end of the runway, the aircraft struck three (3) trees continuing on its destructive flight into a small hill at which point the bombs exploded. Parts of the wreckage ploughed through four (4) Australian Infantry trucks loaded with personnel and equipment, resulting in a very high fatality list. No members of the combat crew survived the crash.

With all causal factors having been considered the committee affixes the error as follows: Pilot 90%, and weather 10%.

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
ARMY FIELD OFFICE (AFO) (C)  
Office of the Group Commander

MEMORANDUM 107/51

A.F.O. 929,  
19 September, 1943.

SUBJECT: Technical Report of Aircraft Accident Classification Committee.  
TO : Commanding General, United States Army Air Forces, War Department,  
Washington, D.C.

1. Transmitted herewith Report of Aircraft Accident Classification Committee, 43rd Bombardment Group (H), A.F.O. 929, of aircraft model B-24D1, A.F.O. No. 240682, assigned to 403rd Bombardment Squadron (H), this Group, which crashed at Jackson Aerodrome, A.F.O. 929, 8 September, 1943.

1 Incl:  
Report.

*Walter J. Hawthorn*  
WALTER J. HAWTHORN  
Lieut. Colonel, Air Corps,  
Commanding.

OCR  
43

"RESTRICTED"

**SECRET**

Accident No.

44-9-8-503

Pilot's Name

Hood Howard J. #10

07 Nature Group

Tree off

51 Specific Nature

Collision with tree

29 Underlying Nature

Misuse of controls

90%

02 Cause Group

Technique

Hood Howard J.

27 Specific Cause

Momentary lack of proficiency

04 Underlying Cause

Physical reaction so slow: overcontrolled + undercontrolled

10%

53 Cause Group

Weather

85 Specific Cause

3 Underlying Cause