

NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER MD (N0428A)

NAS PATUXENT RIVER (N47608)

ALL ATC ACTIVITIES ()

ALL TACAIR AIRCRAFT ACTIVITIES ()

Classification: ~~UNCLASSIFIED FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY (FOUO)~~

From: AIR TEST AND EVALUATION SQUADRON 23 - VX-23 N39783

Subject: HAZARD REPORT OF, ATC: Unreported weather balloon in W-386/NAS Patuxent River offshore Test Track., Class HAZARD FLIGHT, General Hazard HAZARD - GENERAL

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References:

A. OPNAVINST 3750.6 SERIES

B. JAGINST 5800.7 SERIES

1. General Information:

A. Hazard Severity: HAZARD, Classification: FLIGHT HAZARD - GENERAL

B. WESS Serial Number: 1552924575619

C. Local Serial Number: 12-19

D. RAC: 04 - MINOR RISK

E. Endorser:

F. Event: During a day/VMC test event involving four aircraft executing tactical intercept tactics, a red weather balloon was visually spotted at 27,000 feet MSL. When queried, neither Giant Killer nor Echo control were aware of any weather balloon activity. Additionally, there were no NOTAMs pertaining to weather balloons in the area. Multiple other radar contacts were noted with similar altitudes and speeds (0.1-0.2 IMN). Several ships were operating in the vicinity.

G. Hazard Date, Local: February 13, 2019

H. Hazard Time, Local: 1635

I. Time Zone: R

J. Condition: DAY

2. Data:

A. Reporting Activity: AIR TEST AND EVALUATION SQUADRON 23 - VX-23 N39783

B. Aircraft or UAV:

B1.

(1) Aircraft: EA-18G

(2) BUNO: 169125

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Ref: SECNAVINST 5720.42, OPNAVINST 3750.6 Series and OPNAVINST 5102.1 Series.

- (3) Reporting Custodian: N39783 - AIR TEST AND EVALUATION SQUADRON 23 - VX-23
- (4) Controlling Custodian: NAVAIRSYSCOM (NASC)
- (5) Departure Location: PATUXENT RIVER NAS
- (6) Destination: PATUXENT RIVER NAS, UNITED STATES
- (7) # Aircrew: 2
- (8) # Injured Aircrew: 0
- (9) # Passengers: 0
- (10) # Injured Passengers: 0
- (11) TMR: 2K9
- (12) VMC/IMC N

3. Environment:

- A. Hazard Location Description: ATLANTIC OCEAN (WESTERN - WESTLANT) W-386/NAS Patuxent River Test Track
- B. Hazard Country: UNITED STATES

- C. Hazard State: MARYLAND
- D. Latitude: 38 21 30 N
- E. Longitude: 074 39 27 W
- F. Location: KNHK - PATUXENT RIVER NAS

4. Weather:

- A. Briefed By: NOT APP
- B. Briefing Utilization: NOT APP
- C. Air Temp: F
- D. Relative Humidity:
- E. Dewpoint: F
- F. Water Temp: F
- G. Wind Direction:
- H. Wind Gust:
- I. Ceiling Agl (100s ft):
- J. Sky Condition:
- K. Horizon: VISIBLE
- L. Visibility Statute Miles:
- M. Altimeter Setting:
- N. Icing: N
- O. Obstruction of Vision:
- P. Precipitation:
- Q. Extreme WX:
- R. Briefing Accuracy: NOT APPL

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5. Damage and Hazard Cost:

- A. Non-DoD Damaged/Destroyed Property: \$0.00
- B. DoD Damaged/Destroyed Property: \$0.00
- C. Total Hazard Cost: \$0.00

6. Factors:

6A. ACCEPTED CAUSE FACTORS

A. HumanFactor - Unknown weather balloon in warning area.

(1) Analysis: An unknown agency released a weather balloon without notifying the appropriate channels.

(a) Act: AE103 - Procedure not followed correctly. Weather balloon released without notifying the appropriate channels.

(b) Preconditions:

(1) PP108 - Failed to effectively communicate. Failure to notify the appropriate channels of a weather balloon release.

7. Recommendations:

A. Recommendation: #1

(1) Description: Brief to all aircrew

(2) Remarks: Weather balloons often look identical to spurious radar contacts. Aircrew should be cognizant that weather balloons can stray into operating airspace without controlling agency SA and to treat all radar contacts as actual objects until proven not to be.

(3) Action Agency: ALL TACAIR AIRCRAFT ACTIVITIES

(4) Applies To:

(a) Type: HUMAN FACTOR

(b) Statement: Unknown weather balloon in warning area.

8. CO Comments:

A. N39783 - AIR TEST AND EVALUATION SQUADRON 23 - VX-23

(1) Submitted for tracking.

9. Point of Contact:

A. Name (b)(6)

B. Phone (b)(6) DSN:

C. Email: (b)(6)

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