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WAR DEPARTMENT
AAF Form No. 14
(Rev. 1 Oct. '44)

ARMY AIR FORCES

REPORT OF MAJOR ACCIDENT

Use this form in accordance with AAF Reg. 62-14 and "Aircraft Accident Investigator's Handbook" issued by Office of Flying Safety, Headquarters, AAF.

Fill in all spaces except where otherwise indicated.

If additional space is needed, use additional sheet(s) and identify by proper section letter and subsection number.

FIELD OFFICE—DO NOT USE THIS SPACE

ACTION	DATE
Preliminary Report Received	
Form 14 Received	4-30
Evaluated by SAS 321	5-10
Verified by ERL	5-14
Checked by	5-21
Coded by SLH	5-14

TYPE, MODEL AND SERIES: B-24M

ACCIDENT NO.: 45-4-12-1

NO. AIRCRAFT INVOLVED: 1

Section A—GENERAL INFORMATION

1. PLACE OF ACCIDENT—State, County, Nearest Town, Distance and Direction from Same: San Giovanni 19-015 | Nearest Army Airfield, Distance and Direction from Same: 7782 0

2. WAS COLLISION WITH OTHER AIRCRAFT? ☐ Yes ☒ No | AF NOS. OF AIRCRAFT INVOLVED (File separate Form 14 for each aircraft): 44-50468M | DATE: 4-12-45 | HOUR AND TIME ZONE: 1030 | ☒ DAY ☐ NIGHT

Section B—AIRCRAFT

1. AIRCRAFT NO.	2. TYPE	MODEL	SERIES	3. HOME STATION
44-50468	B-24	M	44 DO	San Giovanni 7785

4. AIR FORCE OR COMMAND	SUBCOMMAND	WING	GROUP NO. AND TYPE	SQUADRON
15th 15		304th	455th Bomb (H) 11	740th

5. DATE OF MANUFACTURE	TOTAL HOURS	DATE LAST OVERHAUL	OVERHAULING DEPOT OR SUPPLIER	HOURS SINCE OVERHAUL
12-29-44	221:20	None	None	None

6. Attach detailed statement of such orders having direct bearing on this accident which have not been complied with. Describe orders and give reasons for noncompliance

Section C—OPERATOR (Person at controls at time of accident)

1. LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE INITIAL	GRADE	BRANCH	ASN	SEX	AGE
Harris	James	T.	2nd Lt	AC	0-835640	M	1923

2. ATTACHED STATION	AF OR COMMAND	SUBCOMMAND	WING	GROUP NO. AND TYPE	SQUADRON
(2)					

3. ASSIGNED STATION	AF OR COMMAND	SUBCOMMAND	WING	GROUP NO. AND TYPE	SQUADRON
San Giovanni 7785	15th 15		304th	455th Bomb (H)	740th

4. AERONAUTICAL RATING? ☒ Yes ☐ No	PRESENT RATING	DATE RECEIVED	5. NORMAL DUTY STATUS
	Pilot	8-4-44	Pilot

Section D—OPERATOR'S FLYING EXPERIENCE (Including civilian)

FLYING TIME	1ST PILOT OR SOLO STUDENT	OTHER PILOT OR OTHER STUDENT
1. TOTAL HOURS	533:50	331:20
2. HOURS THIS TYPE	304 :20	49:40
3. HOURS THIS MODEL	1:35	00:00
4. HOURS LAST 90 DAYS	154:40	00:00
5. HOURS LAST 30 DAYS	81:10	00:00
6. HOURS LAST 24 HOURS	00:00	00:00
7. ACTUAL COMBAT HOURS	55:00	00:00

Fill in items 8 and 9 only if operator was student in training or rated pilot in CIS, OTU, etc.

8. TRAINER CLASS NO. AND SCHOOL, OTU, CCTS, ETC.

9. PHASE AND HOURS IN THIS PHASE

PRIMER	DUAL OR COPILOT	SOLO OR 1ST PILOT

10. AAF SCHOOLS PREVIOUSLY ATTENDED AND DATES

11. INSTRUMENT RATING

TYPE	DATE
B-24	26 Jan 45

LAST CHECK STATION	DATE

12. Was operator on instruments at time of accident or immediately before? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If answer to number 12 is Yes, or if accident occurred at night or under instrument or unknown conditions, fill in items 13 through 17.

HOURS	1ST PILOT	OTHER
13. TOTAL—INSTRUMENT		
14. INSTRUMENT LAST 6 MOS.		
15. INSTRUMENT LAST 30 DAYS		
16. NIGHT, LAST 6 MOS.		
17. NIGHT, LAST 30 DAYS		

Section E—PERSONNEL INVOLVED (Including operator and all other persons, whether in plane or not)

DUTY AT TIME OF ACCIDENT (1)	NAME (Last Name First) (2)	TYPE OF AERO. RATING (Symbols) (3)	SERIAL NO. (4)	GRADE AND BRANCH OF SERVICE (5)	PERS. CLASS. SYMBOL (AAF Reg. 35-1) (6)	ORG. ASSIGNMENT—AIR FORCE OR COMMAND GROUP NUMBER AND TYPE STATION (7)	FATAL MAJOR MINOR NONE MISSING UNKNOWN (8)	PARACHUTES USED Yes (9)	PARACHUTES USED No (10)	PARACHUTES SUCCESSFUL Yes (11)	PARACHUTES SUCCESSFUL No (12)
P 1	Harris, James T.	P	0-835640	2nd Lt AC	182	15th, 304th, 455th (B) (H)	Fatal	X			
CP 2	Blackwell, Wilbur D.	CP	0-833000	2nd Lt AC	182	"	Fatal	X			
N 4	Slawett, Samuel H.	N	0-2075323	2nd Lt AC	182	"	Fatal	X			
B 4	Shelton, Charles R.	B	T-131621	F/O	172	"	Fatal	X			
E 6	Krumsy, Delmer L.		37678316	Cpl	381	"	Fatal	X			
R 9	Edghill, William C.		32983558	Cpl	381	"	Fatal	X			
AG 7	Rehkamp, Donald F.		17144009	Cpl	381	"	Minor	X			
AE 9	Smith, Robert		36466775	Cpl	381	"	Minor	X			
G	Roberts, Thomas C.		34242978	Cpl	38	"	None	X			
G	Armato, Peter W.		16196036	Cpl	38	"	None	X			

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16—41089-1

Section F—DAMAGE

Describe briefly the extent of the damage which occurred. (If no damage, write "None." If aircraft is missing, write "Missing." If aircraft was totally wrecked, so state.)

1. To Aircraft: Totally wrecked

3. To Engine	1	4	2	4	3	4	4	4
5. To Propeller	1	4	2	4	3	4	4	4

4. To Private Property (Explain on Attachments)

Section G—POWER PLANT FAILURE

(Use this section of the form if power plant failure was a contributing cause factor in the accident. This must be signed by engineering officer)

1. Duration of Flight Since Last Take-off — Hours — Minutes

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
2. Engine Model				
3. Engine No.				
4. Engine-Hours Since Last Major Overhaul				
5. Depot or Sub-depot Performing Overhaul				
6. Total Engine-Hours				
7. Propeller Model				
8. Propeller-Hours Since Major Overhaul				

9. Statement of Operator, if Available, on Behavior of Power Plant and Manipulation of Controls Immediately Before Failure: Not available

10. Statement of Engineering Officer, Mechanics, and Others as to What Failed and Probable Reasons Why

11. Octane Rating of Fuel: 100 | Engineering Officer (Name, Grade, and Station)

Section H—AIRFRAME, LANDING GEAR, OR OTHER MATÉRIEL

(Use this section if matériel failure was a contributing cause factor in the accident. This must be signed by engineering officer)

1. Describe the Matériel Failure, Including Statement of Kind of Flight at the Time of Failure and All Factors Which Might Have Contributed Toward the Failure

Engineering Officer (Name, Grade, and Station)

Section I—SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

(Use this section if special equipment—parachutes, radio, dinghies, oxygen equipment, fire extinguishers, etc.—was a contributing cause factor in the accident for any reason including failure, misuse, or by reason of not being in the plane)

1. Describe How the Special Equipment Contributed to the Accident or to Its Results

16—41309-1

Section J—AIRPORT AND FACILITIES AND AIRWAYS

(Use this section if the airport or its facilities or airways facilities were a contributing factor in the accident, either because of inadequacy, condition, or poor maintenance)

1. EXPLAIN

Section K—WEATHER (This must be signed by weather officer of the reporting station)

1. WHAT WAS THE WEATHER AT THE TIME AND PLACE OF THE ACCIDENT? High thin overcast of cirrostratus. Visibility six (6) miles. Haze. Surface wind NNW, 15 MPH.

2. IF WEATHER WAS A FACTOR IN THE ACCIDENT, STATE HOW AND ATTACH COPY OF WEATHER REPORTS

EK

David W. Wolf

WEATHER OFFICER (Name, Grade, and Station) ⇒ DAVID W. WOLF, Captain, AC, SAN GIOVANNI, ITALY

Section L—GENERAL INFORMATION

1. IF ERROR ON THE PART OF SOMEONE OTHER THAN THE OPERATOR WAS A FACTOR, STATE HOW

2. WHAT WAS THE MISSION? COMBAT

3. DID FIRE OCCUR UPON CRASHING? ☐ YES ☒ NO

4. WERE THERE ANY VIOLATIONS OF ORDERS OR REGULATIONS? (Explain)

None

5. DISCIPLINARY ACTION TAKEN OR CONTEMPLATED

None

6. KIND OF CLEARANCE (Attach AAF Form 23) COMBAT | FROM SAN GIOVANNI | TO SECRET | OR LOCAL | STATION OF LAST DEPARTURE SAN GIOVANNI

7. IF UR FORM 54 HAS BEEN SUBMITTED ON ANY FEATURE INVOLVED IN THE ACCIDENT, GIVE UR NO. AND DATE | NO. | DATE

EXPLAIN FULLY AND ATTACH COPY

8. ARE COPIES OF AAF FORMS 1, 1A, ATTACHED HERETO AS REQUIRED BY AAF REGULATION 62-14? ☐ YES ☒ NO

9. ARE PHOTOS ATTACHED? ☐ YES ☐ NO

16—41079-1

Section M—DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

1. TELL IN NARRATIVE FORM, IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS NECESSARY, EVERYTHING THAT IS KNOWN ABOUT THE ACCIDENT. BE SURE TO COVER EVERYTHING THAT MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TOWARD THE ACCIDENT. INCLUDE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION TO PREVENT SIMILAR ACCIDENTS, AND ACTION TAKEN

1. At approximately 10:00 hours, 12 April 1945, JAMES T. HARRIS 2nd Lt., AC, ASN O-835640, Pilot, began take-off on a combat mission in B-24M, ASN 44-50468. The aircraft crashed at end of take-off run. Six crew members were killed, four were slightly injured.

2. At the time of the accident ceiling was unlimited, visibility was six miles. Wind was WSW at 16 - 18 MPH with gusts. Take-off was on runway leading 150° magnetic.

3. The pilot made a normal take-off run. The nose wheel was lifted off the ground at proper airspeed. Interview of slightly injured waist gunner disclosed that the main gear lifted about six inches off the runway, then the airplane settled back on to runway. When main gear touched ground after airplane settled the wheels seemed to be locked. The tower Officer stated that the nose wheel was off the ground in normal take-off position. It is believed that the following sequence of events took place:

a. Take-off began in normal manner.

b. Airplane took off.

c. Pilot used brakes to stop rotation of main gear.

d. Airplane settled back to runway with brakes on.

e. Nose wheel hit runway hard and collapsed.

f. Airplane slid forward on nose section and main gear. Marks on runway indicate this.

g. Airplane slid off end of runway and through field for about 150 yards until it hit a low dirt embankment on side of small road.

h. Airplane was up ended into vertical position on nose section.

4. The entire nose section was demolished but investigation disclosed that throttles were full forward, turbos were set properly, trim tabs were set properly, half-flaps were down.

2. CONCLUSIONS

5. Application of brakes before aircraft was definitely airborne is considered to be the cause of the accident.

RECOMMENDATIONS

All pilots should be instructed on dangers of retracting main gear too soon and of applying brakes too soon after take-off.

3. ACTION TAKEN

Above recommendation disseminated to all pilots of this organization.

II M 04 -

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATING BOARD FROM REPORTING STATION. EACH MEMBER MUST SIGN. →	STATION:	
NAME—PRESIDENT: FRANCIS C. DOMING	NAME—MEMBER: GEORGE E. MC CORD,	NAME—INTELLIGENCE OFFICER: ALVIN E. COONS
GRADE: Major	ORGANIZATION: 741st Bomb Sq.	GRADE: Major	ORGANIZATION: Hq 455th Bomb Gp	GRADE: Major	ORGANIZATION: Hq 455th Bomb Gp
NAME—MEMBER: IRVING BETKE	NAME—MEMBER: FRANK V. THOMPSON	NAME—RECORDER
GRADE: Captain	ORGANIZATION: 740th Bomb Sq	GRADE: Major	ORGANIZATION: Hq 455th Bomb Gp	GRADE	ORGANIZATION

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 16—41520-1

WAR DEPARTMENT
A. A. F. FORM NO. 1 A
REV. (1 JAN. 44)

AIRPLANE FLIGHT REPORT - ENGINEERING

INSPECTION STATUS

	DATE OF OR HOURS DUE	INSPECTED TODAY BY	STATION
PREFLIGHT	3/11/45	[illegible]	
DAILY	3/11/45		APO
25 HOURS	225:40		
50 HOURS	225:00		520
100 HOURS	225:00		

SERVICING AT STATION OF TAKE-OFF
(CHECK IMMEDIATELY BEFORE TAKE-OFF)

SERVICE	FUEL (GALLONS) SERVICED	FUEL (GALLONS) IN TANKS	OIL (QUARTS) NO. 1 SERVICED	NO. 1 IN TANKS	NO. 2 SERVICED	NO. 2 IN TANKS	NO. 3 SERVICED	NO. 3 IN TANKS	NO. 4 SERVICED	NO. 4 IN TANKS	RADIATOR CHECKED
1ST	—	2700	—	168	—	168	—	168	—	168	
2ND	1890	2700	16	168	16	168	20	168	20	168	
3RD											
4TH											
5TH											

INSPECTION OF AUXILIARY EQUIPMENT

EQUIPMENT	SYMBOL	INSPECTED BY	STATION
BOMBARDMENT	E	Zoren	APO
GUNNERY	E	Larson	
CHEMICAL			
COMMUNICATIONS	E	ERVIN	
PHOTOGRAPHIC			
NAVIGATION			
Radar	D	Dortch	

STATUS TODAY: 1. B 2. 3. 4.

EXPLANATION:

EXCEPTIONAL RELEASE

WHEN THE "STATUS TODAY" IS INDICATED BY A RED SYMBOL, AND AN "EXCEPTIONAL RELEASE" HAS NOT BEEN GRANTED BY AN AUTHORIZED MAINTENANCE OFFICER, THE PILOT OF THE AIRCRAFT WILL SIGN THIS RELEASE BEFORE FLIGHT.

RELEASED FOR FLIGHT: 1. 2. 3. 4.

REMARKS: PILOTS AND MECHANICS. SEE INSTRUCTIONS INSIDE FRONT COVER.

#1 Free Air temp out. Pilot: Maj HA Meyer

AIRCRAFT AND ENGINE TIME RECORD
(ENTER IN HOURS AND MINUTES)

	ENGINE NO. 1	NO. 2	NO. 3	NO. 4
HOURS TO DATE	205:30	205:30	205:30	205:30
HOURS TODAY	6:50	6:50	6:50	6:50
TOTAL	212:20	212:20	212:20	212:20
OIL CHANGE DUE				
CUNO CLEANING DUE				

AIRCRAFT	
HOURS TO DATE	205:30
HOURS TODAY	6:50
TOTAL	212:20

Oil Polarnaki
gas Rountate

Pilot's Free Air temp installed - Mist Retsinger
Dual APA 9 installation complete with Antennes
installed total weight 283 lbs. Sgt Dortch

DATE	AIRCRAFT ORG. DATA	AIRCRAFT DATA	ENGINE DATA	
3/11/45	AIR FORCE: 15TH	COMPONENT: AAF	ENGINE MODEL: R-1830-43	
STATION: APO 520	COMD., SERV. COMD. OR DEP'T: 304 Hq Wing		SERIAL NO.: CP322473	SERIAL NO.: CP322461
CREW CHIEF OR ENGINEER: M/Sgt B C Ettinger	GROUP NO. & TYPE: 45 STR (B) (H)	AIRCRAFT MODEL: B-24M	SERIAL NO.: CP322478	SERIAL NO.: CP322588
	SQUADRON NO. & TYPE: 740 TR (B) (H)	AIRCRAFT SERIAL NO.: 44-50468	TOTAL FLIGHT TIME ⇒ :	

740TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H) AAF
Office of the Operations Officer

16 April 1945

SUBJECT: Accident Report.

TO : Whom it May Concern.

1. On the morning of the 12th of April 1945, we were ready to take-off at approximately 1015 hours. We were going down, and had reached the steel matting at the South end of the runway, and it seemed as though the plane would not rise. At one time it seemed to be off the ground about six (6) inches or more and then settled, brakes were applied and released. The second time the brakes were applied the nose wheel collapsed causing the plane to skid on its nose for a considerable distance. After skidding beyond the runway the ship hit a ditch, nosing over in a vertical position.

Peter W. Armato
PETER W. ARMATO,
Cpl., Gunner.

B24M-44-50408
12 APRIL 1945

B24M-44-50408

HEADQUARTERS
455TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Air Inspector
APO 520 US Army

23 April 1945

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Aircraft Accident Report

TO : Chief, Office of Flying Safety, AAF, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Transmitted herewith is the report of an aircraft accident which occurred at this field on 12 April 1945.

For the Air Inspector:

JOSEPH A. CARENICZ,
2st Lt., Air Corps,
Supply and Maintenance Insp.