

Beat: Health

U.S. Air Force fighter jet crashes off Japan, pilot survives

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USPA News - A U.S. Air Force fighter jet crashed in the Pacific Ocean off the Japanese island of Okinawa on Tuesday morning, but the pilot was safely recovered after ejecting from the aircraft, U.S. and Japanese officials said. The cause was not immediately known.

The accident happened at around 9 a.m. local time on Tuesday when the F-15 aircraft crashed in the Pacific Ocean approximately 112 kilometers (70 miles) east of Okinawa island, which is located south of the Japanese mainland. The aircraft was based at the island's Kadena Air Base. Japan Air Self Defense Force rescue squadron crews safely recovered the pilot who ejected from the aircraft before it crashed into the ocean. "The pilot is in stable condition and is being evaluated at a military medical facility," Kadena Air Base said in a brief statement, adding that the pilot's name could not be released. The cause of the crash was not immediately known. Nearly 50,000 U.S. military personnel are stationed in Okinawa, which was under U.S. control from 1945 through 1972. Local residents have repeatedly protested against U.S. forces being stationed in their communities after a number of misdeeds committed by American service members. Two U.S. Navy sailors were sentenced to lengthy prison terms in March after they pleaded guilty to raping a young Japanese woman near Kadena Air Base on October 16, 2012. Investigators said the men had approached the victim as she was walking home during the early morning hours. One of the most shocking incidents was the rape of a 12-year-old girl by three U.S. service members in September 1995, sparking huge protests and forcing the U.S. to relocate an airbase from central to northern Okinawa. It was followed by the arrest of a U.S. Marine in July 2000 after he molested a 14-year-old girl while she slept in her home, and an airman was detained that same month following a hit-and-run accident.

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