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US Air Force MQ-9 Reaper drone crashes near Bagram Air Field

By Khaama Press
November 25, 2015



A drone belonging to the United States Air Force has crashed near the Bagram Air Field in northern Parwan province of Afghanistan, it has been reported.

The \$14 million MQ-9 Reaper was operated out of Kandahar Air Field, more than 300 miles away in southern Afghanistan, by the 451st Air Expeditionary Group.

The incident did not incur any injuries or damage to civilian property, according to an Air Force statement cited in a report by Stars and Stripes newspaper.

The statement further added “The cause of the crash is currently under investigation, but enemy fire was not a factor.”

Capt. Bryan Bouchard, spokesman for 451st Air Expeditionary Group, said “The aircraft went down in a remote area away from any civilian population centers and it was a total loss.”

“The munitions on board were also destroyed with the aircraft.” Citing the total destruction of the Reaper, officials decided that it “did not necessitate a physical securing of the site,” he added.

With a 66-foot wingspan, Reapers are larger and more powerful than the older MQ-1 Predators, according to the newspaper. Reapers, heralded as the Air Force’s first “hunter-killer” unmanned aerial vehicles, can stay airborne for up to 14 hours fully loaded with nearly 4,000 pounds of bombs or Hellfire missiles, 15 times the payload of a Predator.

With more weapons and a reduced range compared to the Predator, Reapers are primarily used for attack, rather than surveillance missions. As of September, the Air Force operated 93 Reapers worldwide.