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French fighter jet crashes in Afghanistan

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A French fighter jet crashed in western Afghanistan on Tuesday, although the crew escaped without injury and enemy fire was not to blame, a French army spokesman said.

"A Mirage 2000-D crashed 100 kilometres (60 miles) west of Farah," French army spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Eric de Lapresle told AFP.

He excluded enemy fire as the cause of the crash, the first of a French plane during the near 10-year conflict in Afghanistan.

"The crew are in good health and have been recovered," the spokesman added.

The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, under which French forces operate in Afghanistan, also confirmed the incident.

"An ISAF aircraft crashed in western Afghanistan this morning," it said in a statement. "The crew members are uninjured and have been recovered and the crash site has been secured."

The statement added that the cause of the crash of the French-built jet was currently unknown and an investigation into what happened had been launched.

France has six fighter jets based in Afghanistan at Kandahar Airfield in the south.

There are around 4,000 French troops stationed in Afghanistan as part of the 130,000-strong international force fighting the Taliban and other insurgents.