



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE  
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IN REPLY REFER TO:

5830

CG

JUN 12 2024

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on (b) (6) of 4 May 24

From: Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force

To: File

Subj: COMMAND INVESTIGATION INTO THE FACTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES  
SURROUNDING THE CLASS A AVIATION MISHAP OF AN MV-22B OF MARINE  
MEDIUM TILTROTOR SQUADRON 363 (REINFORCED) ON 27 AUGUST 2023 IN  
AUSTRALIA

1. On 27 August 2023, an MV-22B from Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 363 (Reinforced) (VMM 363 (REIN)) assigned to Marine Rotational Force – Darwin, crashed into the wooded brush of Melville Island while participating in the Australian Defence Force-led exercise PREDATOR'S RUN. This mishap resulted in the tragic and untimely deaths of Major Tobin Lewis, Captain Eleanor LeBeau, and Corporal Spencer Collart.

2. I would like to express my sincerest condolences and deepest sympathies to the families, friends, and loved ones of Major Lewis, Captain LeBeau, and Corporal Collart. The Marines and Sailors of both I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) and III MEF mourn their tragic passing and your devastating loss.

3. We offer our sincerest thoughts and prayers for our injured: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

4. In response to this tragic mishap, my predecessor appointed a highly qualified and experienced investigative team. The team conducted a thorough and detailed investigation to determine the cause of the mishap. The investigation focused on causal factors. Causal factors are errors that can be directly tied to the accident and without which the accident would not have occurred. The investigation ultimately determined the primary causal factor for the mishap was pilot error.

5. Findings of Fact. I concur with the findings of fact (1-379), as well as the factual assertions made in the preliminary statement and executive summary.

6. Opinions. I concur with the investigating officer's opinions (1-35).

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7. Recommendations. I concur with the investigating officer's recommendations. I will take appropriate administrative action for the Operations Duty Officer (recommendation 19). The following personnel are not assigned to I MEF and, subsequently, not under my administrative control. However, this investigation will be forwarded to their follow-on commands for appropriate administrative action:

- a. Recommendation 16 (Maintenance Material Control Officer)
- b. Recommendation 17 (Maintenance Control Chief)
- c. Recommendation 18 (Aviation Maintenance Officer)
- d. Recommendation 20 (VMM-363 (REIN) Commanding Officer)

8. As evidenced by the investigative findings, Corporal Collart's courageous and heroic act of re-entering the burning cockpit at great personal and fatal risk of his own life in an effort to save Major Lewis and Captain LeBeau displayed extraordinary physical courage.

9. This investigation is closed.

10. The point of contact for this matter is the I MEF Staff Judge Advocate, who can be contacted at (760) 763-2680 or [i\\_mef\\_sja\\_omb@usmc.mil](mailto:i_mef_sja_omb@usmc.mil).

  
M. S. CEDERHOLM

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