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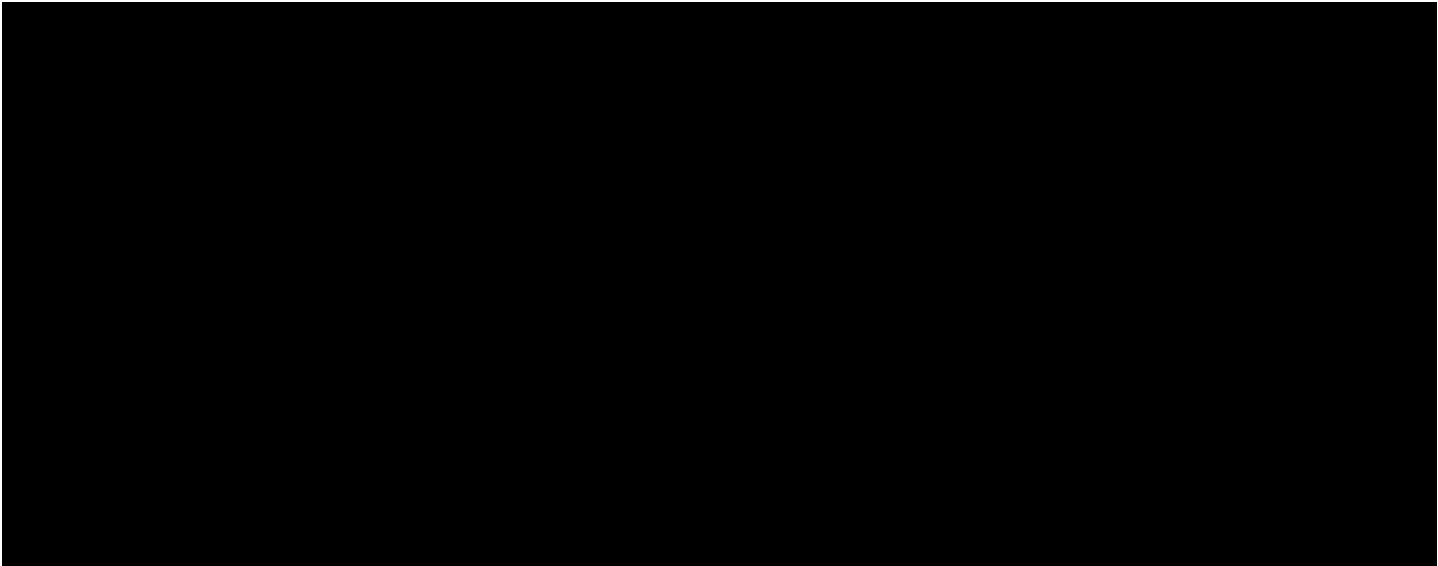
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Military fighter jet crashes into San Diego Bay, pilots eject safely

By Alex Oliveira
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A US military fighter jet crashed into the San Diego Harbor – but both pilots reportedly ejected to safety.

The jet – an EA-18G Growler electric jet – smashed into the water around 10:15 a.m. Wednesday, The War Zone reported.

It landed in the waves just off Shelter Island, a neighborhood located directly across the bay from Naval Air Station North Island, the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department confirmed.



A Boeing EA-18G Growler electronic warfare aircraft crashed on Wednesday morning. AFP via Getty Images

The station specializes in Navy aircraft.

Both pilots were taken to a nearby hospital, but it remains unclear if they suffered any injuries.

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“We saw it take off and it landed over there in the water next to harbor police over there,” a harbor official was heard saying over radio chatter shortly after the wreck as rescue crews were fishing the pilots out of the foggy bay.

“We’re at the site and we’re recovering two parachutes,” another was heard saying.



The pilots, who safely ejected, were sent to the hospital. Getty Images

Others mentioned a large fuel spill left behind by the wreck that crews were scrambling to contain.

The Growler jet is reportedly still in the water, while livestreamed footage from the harbor continues to show scores of response boats patrolling the area.

Both pilots were picked up by a charter fishing boat that saw them eject from the falling plane, NBC San Diego reported.

They were conscious when the boat reached them.

Security footage from near the harbor appeared to capture the moment of the crash, with the plane rocketing toward the water at a nearly vertical angle before disappearing behind a building.

An extensive air-based military exercise has been underway in Southern California this week, according to The War Zone, though it is unclear whether this flight was part of the operation.

The crash was just the latest instance of the \$67 million Growler being involved in a wreck in recent months.



Footage showed numerous boats patrolling the waters as part of the rescue mission.

In October, another Navy EA-18G Growler crashed near Mt. Rainier in Washington — killing both pilots.

Growlers — which are operated by two pilots — have been flown by the Navy for the last 15 years, and have been deployed for operations across the world.

“The EA-18G Growler aircraft we fly represents the most advanced technology in airborne Electronic Attack and stands as the Navy’s first line of defense in hostile environments,” the Navy has said about the jet.

And Wednesday’s crash was just the latest military accident to hit the headlines.

In late January, a US Army helicopter flying along the Potomac River in Washington, D.C., collided with an American Airlines jet landing at Reagan National Airport, killing 67 people.

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