

## = 2007 Balad aircraft crash =

The 2007 Balad aircraft crash was a 9 January 2007 airplane incident involving an Antonov An @-@ 26 airliner , which crashed while attempting to land at the Joint Base Balad in Balad , Iraq , which was at that time operated by the United States Air Force . The crash killed 34 people aboard and left one passenger critically injured . Officials claim the crash was caused by poor weather conditions , but other sources claim that this is a cover @-@ up and the plane was actually shot down by a missile .

## = = Aircraft = =

The aircraft was an Antonov An @-@ 26B @-@ 100 , registration number ER @-@ 26068 . It made its first flight in 1981 , and was powered by two Ivchenko AI @-@ 24VT engines . An @-@ 26s are a twin @-@ engined light turboprop transport aircraft derived from the Antonov An @-@ 24 , with particular attention made to potential military use . It has a modified rear fuselage with a large cargo ramp .

## = = Background = =

The aircraft , which took off from Adana , Turkey , at about 0400 GMT , was owned by the Moldovan company AerianTur @-@ M , and on the day of the accident had been chartered to a Turkish construction company , Kulak , who had been contracted to build a new hangar at the air base . The aircraft hired by BSA Aviation Ltd ( charterer ) was carrying both cargo and passengers ; a total of 1 @,@ 289 kg ( 2 @,@ 842 lb ) of cargo was on board , compared with the 5 @,@ 000 kg ( 11 @,@ 000 lb ) capacity . Turkish authorities told CNN Türk television that of the passengers , there were 29 Turkish workers , three Moldovans , a Russian , a Ukrainian , and an American on board , even though this totals one more than the number of people known to be on board . Later , the Russian consul general in Antalya said the Russian and the Ukrainian also had Moldovan citizenship . Most of those on board were construction workers who worked at the base . Brig. Gen. Robin Rand , commander of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing , said " These brave civilian @-@ contract employees were in Iraq helping us accomplish our mission , and their loss is a tragedy , " adding " Our condolences go out to the families in their time of loss . "

## = = Crash = =

The plane crashed at 0700 GMT ( 0800 CET ) , about 2 @.@ 5 km ( 1 @.@ 6 mi ) away from Balad Air Base , the main hub of US military logistics in Iraq , while attempting to land . An anonymous ministry official told the Associated Press that the pilot had already aborted one landing attempt due to poor weather conditions . Although the aircraft was said to have crashed due to fog , one eyewitness , a relative of one of the deceased , said that he watched a missile strike the right hand side of the fuselage while standing just 300 ? 400 meters ( 984 @-@ 1 @,@ 312 ft ) from where the aircraft went down . The man also said that multiple other eyewitnesses also saw the aircraft get shot down . ?small Kulak , a partner in the ownership of the Kulak Construction Company , was among the dead .

## = = Emergency response = =

Because the aircraft crashed in a military base , the emergency response was supplied by the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force . Ground ambulance response was by the 206th Area Support Medical Company , which is an US Army National Guard from Missouri . Eight ambulances responded with support from the base QRF . Helicopters from the Air Force 's 64th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron transported the dead from the scene . Of the 35 passengers and crew members on board the flight , two individuals were pulled alive from the wreckage . One died after being transported by an Army

ground ambulance to the Air Force Theater Hospital . The other survivor , a Turk named Abdülkadir Akyüz , was carried by an Army ground ambulance to the Air Force Theater Hospital , where he received life @-@ saving emergency surgery .

= = Reaction from the Islamic Army in Iraq = =

The day after the accident , the insurgent group Islamic Army in Iraq , using a web site known by authorities to be used by the group , claimed that they shot the plane down . The statement said that their members had " opened fire on a plane trying to land at an American base near Balad from different directions , using medium @-@ range weapons ... With the help of God , they were able to shoot it down . "

= = Investigation = =

After the wreckage was photographed in situ , the army hauled it away on flatbed trucks to the base , where it is presently secured . As well as the ongoing question of fog , Ahmed al @-@ Mussawi , spokesman for the Iraqi transport ministry , said one day after the crash that " It must have been technical failure or a lack of aviation experience ( on the part of the crew ) , " . The crash is under investigation by the Iraqi government , American government and Moldovan government , but the Turkish government has been denied permission to join the investigative team . The Air Force and the Army say they are willing to help with the investigation . Ali Ariduru , deputy head of the Turkish aviation authority , said initial information indicated there was no technical malfunction on the plane .

There is confusion as to the whereabouts of the aircraft 's Flight Data Recorder and Cockpit Voice Recorder ( FDR and CVR , commonly referred to as " black boxes " ) . The Turkish Foreign Ministry stated they have been shipped to Antonov 's Kiev headquarters , but Turkish Minister of Transportation Binali Y?ld?r?m claims they are still in Iraq , with the rest of the debris . All that is confirmed is that they have been recovered , which occurred on 30 January .