

UNCLASSIFIED

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Ne

HQ USAF KIRTLAND AFB NM//SE//

ALSAFECOM

377ABW KIRTLAND AFB NM//SEG//

150FW KIRTLAND AFB NM//SEG//

HQ AFOTEC KIRTLAND AFB NM//SE/SEG//

58SOW KIRTLAND AFB NM//SE/SEG//

AFRL KIRTLAND AFB NM//SE/SEG//

INFO COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA//CODE 40//

CDRUSASC FORT RUCKER AL//CSSC-Z//

CONDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC//G-KSE//

HQ USAF WASHINGTON DC//SEI//

UNCLAS

SUBJ: ALSAFECOM 0003/99, DEFICIENCY REPORTING VS. MISHAP REPORTING

1. THE AIR FORCE IS EXPERIENCING TROUBLING INSTANCES WHERE WEAPON-RELATED MISHAPS ARE ONLY BEING REPORTED AS DEFICIENCY REPORTS (DR) AND NOT AS MISHAPS IAW 91-204 AS WELL. DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY MISHAP REPORTING. NOT ONLY DOES IT GET THE WORD OUT TO ALL, BUT IT CAN ALSO JUSTIFY FUNDS FOR PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT.
2. CASE IN POINT: WARNER ROBINS ALC SAFETY OFFICE HAS EXPRESSED CONCERN TO AFSC/SEW REGARDING BLOWN INFRARED (IR) DOMES ON AIM-9M

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MISSILES. INITIALLY, IT WAS BELIEVED THAT THE DOMES ARE ONLY "FALLING" FROM THE SEEKER ONTO THE CONCRETE FLOOR OR RAMP AND SHATTERING. HOWEVER, FURTHER INVESTIGATION REVEALED THAT OPERATIONAL AND CAPTIVE FLIGHT AIM-9M SEEKER HEADS HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO BUILD UP SEVERAL HUNDRED POUNDS OF ARGON GAS PRESSURE CAUSING THE IR DOME TO SEPARATE FROM THE MISSILE WITH CONSIDERABLE FORCE. IR DOMES ARE SEPARATING BECAUSE OF INTERNAL PRESSURE BUILDUP DUE TO CLOGGED VENT PLUGS IN THE SEEKER COOLING SYSTEM. AVAILABLE DATA SUGGESTS THE DOMES ARE POPPING OFF IN FLIGHT, ON THE RAMP, AND IN TEST FACILITIES WHILE UNDERGOING ELECTRICAL TEST. METAL PARTS, SUCH AS THE SEEKER MIRROR AND GYRO, CAN BE LAUNCHED 40 TO 60 FEET IN FRONT OF THE MISSILE BODY AND BECOME A FOREIGN OBJECT DAMAGE OR A SAFETY THREAT TO PERSONNEL. ACCORDING TO WR-ALC/SEW, THERE ARE ABOUT 200 DR'S ON SEPARATED IR SEEKER DOMES. UNFORTUNATELY, THE WEAPON SAFETY COMMUNITY HAS ONLY SEEN FOUR REPORTS ON THE SUBJECT AND TWO OTHER REPORTS THAT COULD BE CAUSED BY EXCESSIVE PRESSURE.

3. DR'S AND MISHAP REPORTING ARE SEPARATE SYSTEMS. MISHAP REPORTING IS STILL REQUIRED IAW AFI 91-204, EVEN THOUGH A DR IS SUBMITTED, BECAUSE AN UNEXPECTED EVENT OCCURRED. BOTTOM LINE - SAFETY PERSONNEL, BOTH FLIGHT AND WEAPONS, NEED TO BE INVOLVED TO ENSURE

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MISHAPS ARE REPORTED IAW 91-204.

4. MY POINT ON CONTACT FOR THIS MATTER IS MAJ SAM PINO, SEWO, DSN
246-0457 OR MR DAVE HERMANN, SEWO, DSN 246-2979.

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