

Seat-belt malfunction kills Canadian pilot

by UPI

GREAT FALLS, Mont. -- An investigation into the death of a member of the Canadian air force's elite flying team revealed his seat belt came undone and caused the plane to crash. Canadian air force Capt. Shawn McCaughey, 31, died May 18 when his jet crashed at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana, the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. reported. Canadian defense officials launched an inquiry into McCaughey's death and found out that while he was steering his plane through a roll, his lap belt came undone, causing him to fall out of his seat and lose control of the plane. McCaughey and other Canadian Forces Snowbirds were practicing for an air show at the Malmstrom Air Force Base, near Great Falls, Mont., when the accident occurred. One day after the crash Col. Richard Foster described McCaughey as a "very professional pilot" with 1,400 hours of flying experience. Monday's report was prepared by the Canada's defense department's Force Directorate of Flight Safety, which will also examine why the seat belt apparently came undone.

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