

Hellenic Air Force F-104 crashes: with pilot losses

May 8, 1964, TF-104G, with sn **62-12272/FG-272**, cn 5517 of 335 Squadron, 114 Ptx crashed after engine failure at Inoi near Tanagra AB, both pilots were killed, Major Panagiotis Anagnostou Squadron Leader of 335 Squadron and Major Petros Marinos Training Officer of 335 Squadron.

During the final phase the engine power of the plane cut off suddenly. The plane's altitude was too low however Major Marinos used the ejection seat (C 2) but his chute did not deploy, they found him beside the national road near the tolls of Shimatari tied on his seat. Major Anagnostou did not make it to bailout and they find him in the plane!

June 19, 1965, F-104G with sn **63-12726/FG-726**, cn 6078 crashed at Tanagra AB during landing with a cross wind of 10-18 Knots, the aircraft veered off Rwy and the aircraft broke up and caught fire been totally destroyed, pilot 1st Lt Stylianos Nikolaou of 114 Ptx 335 Mira was killed. http://www.pasoipa.org.gr/lefkoma/pilot_details/?id=491

July 15, 1965, F-104G with sn **63-12704/FG-704**, cn 6056 of 335 Squadron, 114 Ptx crashed from flaps asymmetry at Tanagra AB, killed the pilot Major Christos Efstathiou, Squadron Leader of 335 Squadron.

At the end of the flight Efstathiou flew very low, about 30 feet above the runway with the flaps in "Land" position performing a "missed approach", he tried to retract the flaps into "TO"(Take-off) position, but the right flap remained stuck in Land position during the left flap continued to retract, as a result instantaneously rolled and crashed on the runway!

(Information from General Katzilierakis, he was eye witness of Efstathiou accident)

January 18, 1968, F-104G with sn **63-12714/FG-714**, cn 6066 of 335 Squadron crashed at the weapon ground of Marathona, pilot Lieutenant Giorgos Kostolampros was killed.

November 27, 1969, the F-104G with sn **61-2624/FG-624**, cn 4024 of 336 Squadron crashed at the village Krinos Achaïas, killed the pilot Lieutenant Giorgos Dimakis. The cause is still unknown.

June 31, 1972, crashed the TF-104G with sn **62-12273/FG-273**, cn 5518 of 336 Squadron, 116th Ptheriga crashed into the ground during an aerobatics exercise at Neraidorachi, near Krestena, Iliá (accurate location Bambes Makrision) killing both pilots Major Alexandros Damianidis, Training Officer of 336 Squadron and Captain Christos Philippou. No evidence of mechanical failure had been found and all indications were that the engine was running normally at the time of impact. Eye witness statements strongly suggested that the aircraft was in a pitchup before the crash.

February 24, 1976, F-104G with sn **63-12697/FG-697**, cn 6049 of 336 Squadron crashed near the Araxos AB, killed the pilot Captain Roulias Spyridon, he used the ejection seat but because of the low altitude and bank angle the parachute did not open. The aircraft started an uncontrollable continuous roll, low and very close to the runway. In fact he could not chose a position to bail out.

April 28, 1977, F-104G with sn **63-12721/FG-721**, cn 6073 of 335 Squadron, 116 Ptx crashed at the region of Thivas, killed the pilot Lieutenant Konstantinos Kizas.

November 21, 1978, the F-104G with sn **63-12711/FG-711**, cn 6063 of 336 Squadron, 116 Ptx crashed at the sea area of Kyllinis due to a possible failure of pilot to properly control and set his instruments thus misreading his altimeter; the pilot Lieutenant Dimitrios Bibikos was never found.

F-104G 711 crashed in the sea area between Peloponnese and the Zakynthos island near Loutra Kyllinis while returning from a flight after performing night weapons training at the ground (range) of Paleochori Ilias, it was a formation of three aircraft. The deep depth of the sea at the crash point prevented the haul of the aircraft and his body was never found.

January 22, 1979, the F-104G with sn **62-12318/FG-318**, cn 6017 of 336 Squadron of 116Ptx crashed on the hill of Prophet Elias in the Mpozaitika Patras, killed the pilot Lieutenant Constantinos Davillas. (CFIT: Controlled flight into terrain),
The accident took place at the area of Bozaitika just NE of the town of Patra.
The pilot while on an instrument training flight on his way back decided to perform aerobatics over populated area (his girlfriend was living there) that was beyond his capabilities resulting in loss of aircraft control at very low altitude and crashing on the hill of Profitis Elias and killing himself. It was about 5-6 km from center of town Patra.

January 15, 1980, the F-104G with sn **64-17780/FG-780**, cn 6125 of 336 Squadron crashed at Arta, the pilot Captain Spyridon Papastavrou was killed
F-104G 780 crashed at Arta Epirus, more specific performing an exercise with SOT (School Tactical Weapons), Papastavrou was a trainee pilot at SOT and engaged with an F-4E, during the exercise he did not extend the flaps to T.O. position and the plane stalled.

This Starfighter was written off when it crashed at Menidi at the Preveza shooting range. The pilot, Captain Spyridon Papastavrou was sadly killed. It happened during a SOT mission (Fighter Weapons School) when it was involved in a ACM fight against an F-4E. It was the fourth or fifth time that the two planes circle that area repeating the exercise when the accident happened where the pilot was unable to pull up in time. The unlucky pilot tried to use the ejection seat but it was too late and he partially made it. He was found near the crash site carrying his parachute according locals. The plane crashed at a hill side east of the national road and the engine was found about 500m away on the west side.

April 15, 1980, the TF-104G with cn **5909/TFG-5909** (no sn, ex 27+80) of 335 Squadron crashed at the sea area of Zakynthos, both pilots Captain Spyridon Bourtzinacos and Captain Sotirios Laourdekis, were never found

September 23, 1987, F-104G with sn **62-12308/FG-308**, cn 6007 of 335 Squadron crashed on the Mountain Ossa (Kissavos) (CFIT: Controlled flight into terrain), the pilot Lieutenant Stavros Zografos was killed.

Hellenic Air Force F-104 crashes: with pilot safe ejections (bailout)

December 16, 1966 F-104G sn **63-12723/FG-723**, cn 6075 crashed; reason unknown. Captain Christos Papathanasiou ejected safely. The plane flew over Lamias city when it crashed about 12:00 am.

August 22, 1967 TF-104G with sn **62-12275/FG-275**, cn 5520 crashed with 114 Ptx at Tanagra AB after a compressor stall during takeoff; crew ejected safely.

July 2, 1968 F-104G with sn **63-12729/FG-729**; cn 6081 of 116 Fighter Group 336 Fighter Squadron written off when it crashed into the sea returning from the Potidaias firing field (Khalkidhiki). During Straight and Level Flight the pilot Captain Mihalakopoulos suffered negative G with a simultaneous right rotation tendency of the aircraft, the pilot was unable to return the aircraft to smooth flight and exit the spin resulting in a successful ejection. Primary cause: Undetermined.

October 29, 1969 TF-104G crashed with **sn 61-3025/FG-025**, cn 5501, both pilots bailed out. Accident Details: On October 29th 1969 pilots Captain Apostolakhs and 2nd Lieutenant Grammatikos ejected safely from FG-025 of 116 FG 335 FS at Chalkis area. Accident Cause undetermined.

May 8, 1969 F-104G with sn **61-12309/FG-309**, cn 6008 from 336 Mira of 116 Wing crashed at the Patraikos Kolpos (Gulf of Patras). The pilot bailed out. After a successful mission pilot Georgios Fousekis returned to Araxos AB for landing, approaching the AB from North East at 5000' feet and 400 knots, suddenly noticed strong and unusual vibration of the engine. After that there was a progressive decrease of the engine RPM, increase of exhaust gas temperature (EGT), and speed decrease. The official cause of the accident was compressor stall.

July 5, 1971 F-104G with sn **61-2609/FG609**, of 114th Ptx, 335th Mira from Tanagra AB was lost due to a fatal engine compressor stall at Velestino Volos during a training mission, pilot Maj Aristidis Politis ejected safely (take off from Tanagra AB at 11:40 am)

January 15, 1973 F-104G with sn **62-12321/FG-321**, cn 6020 crashed due to complete loss of engine oil and subsequent engine seizure in the sea area 3 miles east of Rafina, the pilot Lieutenant E. Skliris bailed out and was safe, MB seat.

September 24, 1973 F-104G sn **63-12705/FG-705**; cn 6057 crashed during takeoff, pilot Grigorios Noussias of 116 Fighter Group 336 Fighter Squadron was forced to abort takeoff due to experiencing severe "Shimmy" of nose landing gear, aircraft engaged with the LISS-500S (arresting-gear system) and caught fire resulting in aircraft severe damage; written off

May 4, 1974 F-104G with sn **62-12302/FG-302**, cn 6001 crashed 60 miles south-west of the Zakynthos Island, pilot Lieutenant Pantelis Tsolis ejected safely (MB seat). 62-12302 was lost when cockpit was covered with black smoke and pilot Lieutenant Tsolis ejected safely from a/c 302. Main causes cover of cockpit in black smoke and failure of the pilot to follow the proper procedures.

November 12, 1974 F-104G sn **62-12319/FG-319**, cn 6018 crashed November 12, 1974, pilot Captain Pantelis Tzouros of 336 Fighter Squadron of 116 Combat Wing was inside FG-319 when it crashed about 19:10 p.m. during a night-CPM mission. The plane crashed into the sea 10 nautical miles southwest of Zakynthos island. The pilot ejected safely and had to

wait for 3 hours to be picked up by the ferry "Proteus" which sailed from Zakynthos port. Captain Pantelis Tzouros abandoned his aircraft due to hallucinations.

January 25, 1978 F-104G sn 63-12727/FG-727, cn 6079 crashed, the pilot L. Kazoleas successfully bailed out (MB seat). Aircraft was abandoned by the pilot due to disorientation while flying through heavy weather.

July 16, 1985 TF-104G serial number 61-3043/TF-714, cn 5714 had an accident during taxiing, both pilots were rescued. Destroyed on the ground by fire after the tip-tanks were jettisoned accidentally on July 16, 1985 and its rear fuselage was burned out (possibly at Hellinikon AB); written off (DBR) and withdrawn from use.

July 17, 1985 the TF-104G with sn 61-3065/TF-5736, cn 5736 crashed. Both pilots Apostolopoulos Elias and Dritsakos Giorgos bailed out (MB seat). The cause of the accident was fire in the air due to unknown reasons, the pilots fell into the sea six miles east of Ithaca.

October 16, 1985 F-104G sn 6684/FG-6684 of 336 Mira, crashed at location between communities Roviata and Savalia Ilias, during weapons ground training mission, the plane directed from Andravida AB to the sea area of Kyllinis, the pilot Captain Andronis Athanasios bailed out successfully (C-2 seat).

During a low altitude gunnery training mission from Araxos airbase, a safety pin inside the engine failed destroying the compressor blades. This resulted initially in fire and later explosions with debris penetrating the fuselage. Efforts were made to climb up from 400' feet and return safely at Andravida AB.

The plane began to turn upside down due to gases coming from the side of fuselage because of the explosion. After repositioning the plane to a horizontal attitude three times the decision was made to eject. The pilot pulled the seat handle to activate the ejection process.

January 27, 1987, F-104G crashed with sn 63-12719/FG-719, cn 6071 during a training flight in the region of Gastounis, Ilias more specifically in Agia Maura. The pilot Captain Theodoros Bekos successfully bailed out (MB seat). The cause of the accident is unknown.

March 16, 1987, TF-104G sn 62-12267/TF-267, cn 5512 crashed at Messinia near Meligala. The pilots Nicolaos Fifas and Elias Apostolopoulos bailout successfully (2nd bailout for Apostolopoulos Elias) (MB seat). still not 100% confirmed serial

May 25, 1989 the F-104G crashed with sn 63-12725/FG-725, cn 6077 from lack of fuel near Koroni Messinia and the pilot Captain G.Zafiriou. bailed out successfully.

June 8, 1989 the F-104G sn 7094/FG-7094, cn 7094 ex German 22+21, at Araxos AB, the accident happened during the landing the landing gear collapsed and the aircraft ran off the runway, the pilot Captain Giorgos Konstantopoulos bailed out successfully.

September 11, 1989 the F-104G with sn 7420/7420 crashed after a test flight, the aircraft was received by the EAB (Hellenic Airspace Industry), fell in the swamp near the restaurant 116 C.W. during landing due to a problem of fuel, possibly lack of fuel, the operator Major Vasilios Mpalkouras successfully bailout.

September 18, 1990, the RF-104G with s/n 6679/FG-6679, cn 6679 had a problem during the landing phase, the landing gear was not extended and the aircraft finally was landing with closed landing gear. This all happened after the end of the military exercise "Parmenion", taking place at the airport of Larissa AB; the pilot Captain Fofoulas Ioannis was injured and rendered first aids.

Written off at Larissa after a landing accident. The pilot, Captain Ioannis Foufoulas, landed the aircraft without gear. The aircraft was heavily damaged and pilot was injured although he could walk away safe. It was one of a number of aircraft on transition from Araxos to Larissa to take part in the big tri-service exercise "Parmenion". The accident happened on the last day of the exercise when the aircraft was returning to base (Larissa AB). Everything went fine until it was on finals when the people at the base realized that the landing gear was not down, but though they tried to notify pilot about the problem it was too late as she entered the runway touching down on pylon tanks. So after a few meters skidding on pylon tanks suddenly the left one was detached causing the aircraft to veer to the left only to stop several meters away broken up. The RF-104G 6679 next day was loaded and transported to Hellinikon AB (AF Depot) obviously in a bad state to salvage anything that could be of use. The pilot was injured but safe.

April 23, 1991 the F-104G with **sn 7153/FG-153** had an accident during the landing phase where the pilot had a problem with the landing gear, during landing the nose landing gear collapsed and the plane run out from the runway, the pilot Captain Evangelos Roussis successfully bailed out.

June 23, 1992 F-104G with sn 62-12305/FG-305; written off when it crashed at the Kranea Weapons Range, Greece, when it encountered an engine stall at 3000 ft. during a bomb run. Pilot 1st Lt. Vasilios Zisis ejected safely.

The F-104G crashed on the Kranea combat airfield. At this mission participated two F-104G flew during iconic bombardment. At the approach to the target the plane climb from 600 ft to 3000 ft before the final dive. At this point encountered an engine stall and it was unable to get out due to low altitude.

September 3, 1992 crashed two F-104G, more precisely a F-104G with **sn 7082/FG-082** (Nicolaos Martidis,) and a RF-104G with sn **6664/FG-6664** (Panayiotis Ntardas) derived from 116 CW to Araxos. Both planes flying in formation over the rural area Itenos and just 2 km from the Andravida airport 117 CW. The two F-104s crossed in the air with two F-4Es that had taken off from the Andravida airport. In their efforts to avoid a conflict, the two pilots of 336 Squadron Lieutenant Martidis, Nicolaos and Ntardas, Panayiotis after leader prompting bailouts their planes using their parachutes and landed without injury, while the two aircrafts collided in the air and crashed in ground.

Note from Ioannis Mylonas:

Any way regarding the particular incident there is nothing strange it happened exactly as you described it, the only difference been the fact that the flight of F-104Gs consisted actually of 3 aircraft and they had entered Andravida AFB area in low level without notification probably heading south and the two F-4Es after takeoff were in a LH brake heading north also in low level (No.1 Argyropoylos and No.2 Karnachoritis).

So the F-104Gs flight leader facing the inevitable and finding himself in a safe position ordered his No.2 Martidis and his No.3 Ntardas to eject thinking that they would collide with the F-4Es, and they did so, as result their aircraft uncontrolled collided and crashed while the F-4Es manage to avoid collision and returned to base. See attached Google Earth photo and my estimated sketched routes. This was actually an accident of stupidity which cost the loss of two aircraft and fortunately not their pilots too.



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August 10, 2022