

Beat: Technology

Plane crash in southern Afghanistan kills 4 ISAF troops

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USPA News - At least four coalition service members were killed Saturday when a small plane crashed in the southern region of Afghanistan, the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said. The exact cause was not immediately known.

The accident happened on Saturday afternoon when the fixed-wing aircraft went down in the Shah Joy district of Zabul province, which is located in the country's volatile south. Coalition officials refused to disclose the exact type of aircraft involved in the crash or how many people were on board. "At this time we can't confirm the exact number onboard, we can only say that there were four ISAF fatalities as a result of the crash," said U.S. Air Force Captain Daniel Einert, an ISAF spokesman. "We cannot discuss the specific type of aircraft, however we can say that this was a smaller fixed-wing aircraft." Taliban spokesman Qari Yousuf Ahmadi said the crash happened at around 3 p.m. local time, but did not claim responsibility for the accident. "The site was immediately cordoned off by enemy attack helicopters while another helicopter landed nearby to airlift the losses," he said. A statement from the multinational force said the cause of the accident is under investigation, but said there was no evidence to suggest there was enemy activity in the area at the time of the crash. The coalition refused to release the nationalities of those killed, referring casualty identification procedures to national authorities. Earlier this month, two American service members were killed when their helicopter came down in an agricultural field in the Pachir Aw Agam district of Nangarhar province, which is located in Afghanistan's eastern region. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the crash, but both ISAF and Afghan officials have rejected the claim. On March 11, five American soldiers were killed when a coalition helicopter crashed during a rain storm in southern Kandahar province. It followed the crash of a Black Hawk helicopter in Kandahar province in August 2012, killing seven American service members and four Afghans.

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

United Press Association, Inc.
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA
(702) 943.0321 Local
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile
info@unitedpressassociation.org
info@gna24.com
www.gna24.com