



News Release

For immediate release

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Ocean City Air Show to go on as Planned

OCEAN CITY, MD – June 3, 2016 – The Ocean City Air Show will go on as planned, OC Air Show officials announced Friday.

The crash of a Thunderbird jet in a field outside Petersen Air Force Base in Colorado following their flyover for the Air Force Academy Graduation has temporarily stood down the team for an undetermined amount of time. The Thunderbirds have officially cancelled their performance at Kirtland Air Force Base this weekend. There has been no change to their scheduled performance at the Rhode Island National Guard Open House on June 11-12 or for their performance at the OC Air Show on June 18-19.

Major Alex Turner, the Opposing Solo and Thunderbird 6, safely ejected from his F-16C on Thursday and is in good condition, according to the team. He met with President Obama following the incident. The President spoke at the graduation ceremony.

“The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds demonstration team will be stood down for an undetermined amount of time, following this mishap,” according to a statement released last night from the Thunderbirds. “A stand down following a significant mishap is standard procedure, allowing accident investigation officials to gather facts and ensure the continued safe operation of our aircraft.”

The crash of a U.S. Navy Blue Angel jet yesterday in an un-related incident in Smyrna, TN resulted in the death of Capt Jeff Kuss, Blue Angel 6. Capt Kuss was the Opposing Solo pilot for the 2016 Blue Angels and last year served as Blue Angel 7, the team’s advance pilot and narrator. He narrated every Blue Angel performance last year at the team’s inaugural appearance at the OC Air Show. Thousands of spectators met him as he walked the beach during the narration of the performances.

“Our hearts and prayers are with the family of Capt Kuss and the entire Blue Angels team,” said Bryan Lilley, President of the OC Air Show. “He was an American hero and I am truly honored to have had the opportunity to get to know him personally. I know everyone who had a chance to meet him has been touched by such an amazing individual.”

The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds are scheduled to headline the OC Air Show on June 18-19th over the oceanfront that will also feature the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and the U.S. Navy F-18F Super Hornet.

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