

Probable USN JRF5, Grumman “Goose” Crash Site, Sandia Mountains, NM

DATE July 7, 1952

AIRCRAFT JRF5, Bureau No. 084814

GENERAL LOCATION Sandia Wilderness Area north of I-40

PEOPLE ABOARD Pilot(USN), Co-Pilot(Civilian, Navy Dept.), two more USN personnel & one USNR personnel

REFERENCES MIR/AAR aircraft accident verification MIR ID No. 13201, and *Albuquerque Journal* newspaper articles following the event

HISTORY

The following specific aircraft information was found on the Internet. The Grumman G-21, “Goose” amphibian was originally designed as an 8-seat commuter plane for businessmen in the Long Island, NY area. The design was very successful and it was ordered by all services and by many other countries for both military and commercial use. A U.S. Navy variant was the JRF-5.

The subject airplane crash is suspected to be a JRF-5 that crashed in the Sandia Mountains on July 7, 1952. That event was reported in the July 9 and 10, 1952, issues of the *Albuquerque Journal*. The Navy official crash report was ordered in early December 2008. The Naval Historical Center sent a reply dated January 21, 2009, saying that there are no JRF accident



reports in their microfilm collection from September 29, 1951, until August 18, 1952. However, they did send the above MIR/AAR aircraft accident verification data.

The *Journal* articles report the plane was based in Sanford, Florida. When it crashed, it was on a flight from Wichita Falls, Texas, to Kirtland AFB (KAFB) in Albuquerque. The crash was found by a ground party from KAFB who removed the dead. They were attached to *High Altitude Interception Reconnaissance*, a special project of the NAS at Sanford, Florida. The crash time period appears to be correct and no other USN amphibian crashes are known to have occurred in the Sandia Mountains. Crash explorers made site visits on December 5, 2008, and May 10, 2009, when it was hoped more examination of the wreckage might identify this aircraft. The plane had definite military markings consistent with the crash time period and physical characteristics of a Grumman “Goose.” However, in spite of an estimate made by a very experienced crash explorer that there may be approximately 60% of the wreckage left on site, there was nothing found that conclusively proves the debris belonged to the plane identified in the MIR/AAR.