

RB-57 crash site in Sandia Mountains, NM

DATE November 7, 1966

AIRCRAFT RB-57, USAF ID No. 63-13297

GENERAL LOCATION Close to the road to Sandia Crest and over 10,000 feet elevation

PEOPLE ABOARD Pilot and another crew member

REFERENCES Second, third and possibly fourth-hand reports from another crash explorer and someone who knew a squadron mate of the RB-57 pilot.

HISTORY

The following story sounds like a lot of speculation and, lacking the official crash report, has not been checked. However, this is the best story available and is stated essentially as provided.

The RB-57 was approaching Albuquerque from the east under IFR conditions. The pilot was relying on the Kirtland tower for position tracking. Apparently, the tower radioed that the plane was “clear of the Crest” to indicate the plane had sufficient altitude to pass safely over the 10,678 ft. Sandia Crest. It appears that the pilot interpreted the message to mean that he was safely west of the crest, so he began his descent too soon. That resulted in “controlled flight into ground.” Both crew members perished.

Since the site was within a short distance of the Crest Highway, recovery was easily done. However, crash explorers visited the site in 2006 and still found aircraft parts.



Photo of a similar RB-57 aircraft