F/A-18E Loss Only Fourth Navy Crash This Fiscal Year

ARLINGTON, Va. — The U.S. Navy jet that crashed July 31 in Southern California is only the fourth Navy aircraft to be lost in a crash so far in fiscal 2019, according to records.

The F/A-18E Super Hornet strike fighter, assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron 151, according to a source, and based at Naval Air Station Lemoore, California, was on a low-level flight through a feature called Star Wars Canyon in Death Valley National Park when it crashed near a popular overlook that aviation photographers and other tourists visit to watch jets streak through the canyon.
The crash caused minor injuries to seven civilian tourists at the overlook with fire and flying debris.

As of mid-day Aug. 1, the pilot of the single-seat Super Hornet was still missing. The Navy had launched helicopters to participate in the search for the pilot.

So far this fiscal year, aerial mishaps claimed an F/A-18F Super Hornet, an MH-60R Seahawk helicopter and a T-45C Goshawk training jet. Until the July 31 mishap, no Navy aviators

had been killed in a mishap this year.