

NUMBER: 27 February 1945
 CODE: 1105
 DATE: 27 February 1945

PILOT'S NAME, RANK, & SERVICE GROUP: **BARTSCHAT, Walter J., Jr., Ens. USNR**

ORGANIZATION: **VBF-85**

DATE OF PILOT RATING	TOTAL HOURS THIS MODEL	TOTAL HOURS LAST 3 MONTHS	TOTAL HRS. LAST 3 MONTHS	FL TIME LAST 24 HOURS
	582.6	187.1	93.9	2.0

PREVIOUS ACCIDENT RECORD: NONE

INJURIES TO PILOT: It is to be assumed that primary cause of death was by drowning. Evidence suggests that pilot was injured before or during chute jump. Body not recovered.

NAME & RANK OF OTHER PERSONNEL: NONE

AIRCRAFT MODEL & NO.: **F4U-1D #57878**

DAMAGE	A	B	C	D	E	DAMAGE DESCRIPTION & REMARKS
AIRCRAFT	X					Plane sank at sea.
ENGINE						

GEN. NATURE: **A**

SPECIFIC CAUSES: **(2) Leading of 2nd section who goes below suddenly, spiraling & his plane "catches" possibly injured in fall before accident.**

GENERAL CAUSES: **EA-14 Chute trouble in wind.**

100% UNDETERMINED

GENERAL NATURE OF ACCIDENT: **1105**

LOCATION: **South of Maui, T. H.**

PURPOSE: **Simulated bail strike mission**

OPERATIONAL: **Operational**

ANALYSIS: Following a simulated attack on a land target on Maui Island, T. H., the four planes of Lt. Cdr O'NEILL'S first division climbed back to 8000' rendezvousing enroute. Ens. HOPKINS, Lt. Cdr O'NEILL'S wingman, joined up promptly and was flying to the left of Lt. Cdr. O'NEILL in the proper position. The second section, led by Ens. BARTSCHAT was slow in joining up due to the disposition of the planes following the attack, but was observed closing up from below. Ens. HOPKINS, BARTSCHAT'S wingman, was closing up and was on the outside of a left turn. Suddenly Ens. BARTSCHAT, who was below and on the inside of the turn, zoomed up, rolling slightly, colliding with Ens. HOPKINS' plane, and continued on up above the formation. He was only seen momentarily but was reported as being in a steep rolling zoom. Ens. HOPKINS' plane was out in half, the fuselage being severed close behind the pilot's seat. Both pilots bailed out and landed in the water. Ens. BARTSCHAT was not observed between the time of the collision until he was seen drifting down in his chute. His plane spiraled slowly down, levelled off, and made a smooth water landing, indicating that it was not severely damaged. Ens. HOPKINS landed in his chute and had trouble getting free of the harness while being dragged through the water. Ens. BARTSCHAT was oscillating badly in his chute and was making no apparent effort to dampen the oscillation. He struck the water and was dragged for

ANALYST: **EA-14**

CAUSE	A	B	C	D	E	OTHER
100% UNDETERMINED						