

Marine Pilots Killed in AH-1Z Helicopter Crash; First Naval Aviation Loss of 2019

ARLINGTON, Va. – The loss of a Marine Corps AH-1Z helicopter March 30 was the first crash of a U.S. naval aviation aircraft since the beginning of the calendar year.

Two Marine pilots were killed when the AH-1Z Viper helicopter gunship crashed in the vicinity of Yuma, Arizona, at about 8:45 p.m. March 30, according to a Marine Corps release.

“Both pilots were conducting a routine training mission as part of the Weapons and Tactics Instructor course 2-19,” the release said.

The training was being conducted by Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron One based at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma. The helicopter was assigned to a Marine helicopter light attack squadron, but the identity of the specific squadron has not been released.

An AH-1Z carries a crew of two.

The cause of the crash is under investigation. The names of the deceased pilots have been withheld pending notification of their next of kin.