

# Digest

---

## **\$25 million jet crashes on test flight for NASA**

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE — An F-18 jet crashed Friday in the Mojave Desert while on a NASA research flight, but the pilot ejected safely and escaped injury, space agency officials said. The \$25 million jet, flown by Steve Ishmael, who is the chief pilot of NASA's X-29 forward-sweeping wing experimental plane project, exploded on impact after crashing in the desert near Boron. Ralph Jackson, a NASA spokesman, said Ishmael had been on a "routine safety" flight, assisting another F-18 collecting data on the aerodynamics. Cruising at 20,000 feet, Ishmael's plane suddenly experienced "control problems" and quickly lost altitude, Jackson said. When he failed to regain control, Ishmael parachuted to safety.