

U.S. Air Force clears crew of plane that took off with Afghans on outside of aircraft

Image not found or type unknown



Washington, June 15 (RHC)-- The U.S. Air Force has cleared of any wrongdoing the flight crew of an American military cargo plane that Afghan civilians desperately clamored to hang onto during the chaotic

withdrawal of U.S. occupation forces from the war-torn country.

The Air Force was reported by The New York Times as saying that the crew of the U.S. C-17 cargo plane, which took off from Hamid Karzai International Airport in the Afghan capital of Kabul last August with body parts later found in its wheel well, was cleared of any wrongdoing.

The Air Force claimed that the crew “acted appropriately” as they faced the challenge of hundreds of Afghans trying to board the flight.

The aircrew was “in compliance with applicable rules of engagement,” Ann Stefanek, an Air Force spokeswoman, was quoted by the American daily as saying, adding that they “acted appropriately and exercised sound judgment in their decision to get airborne as quickly as possible when faced with an unprecedented and rapidly deteriorating security situation.”

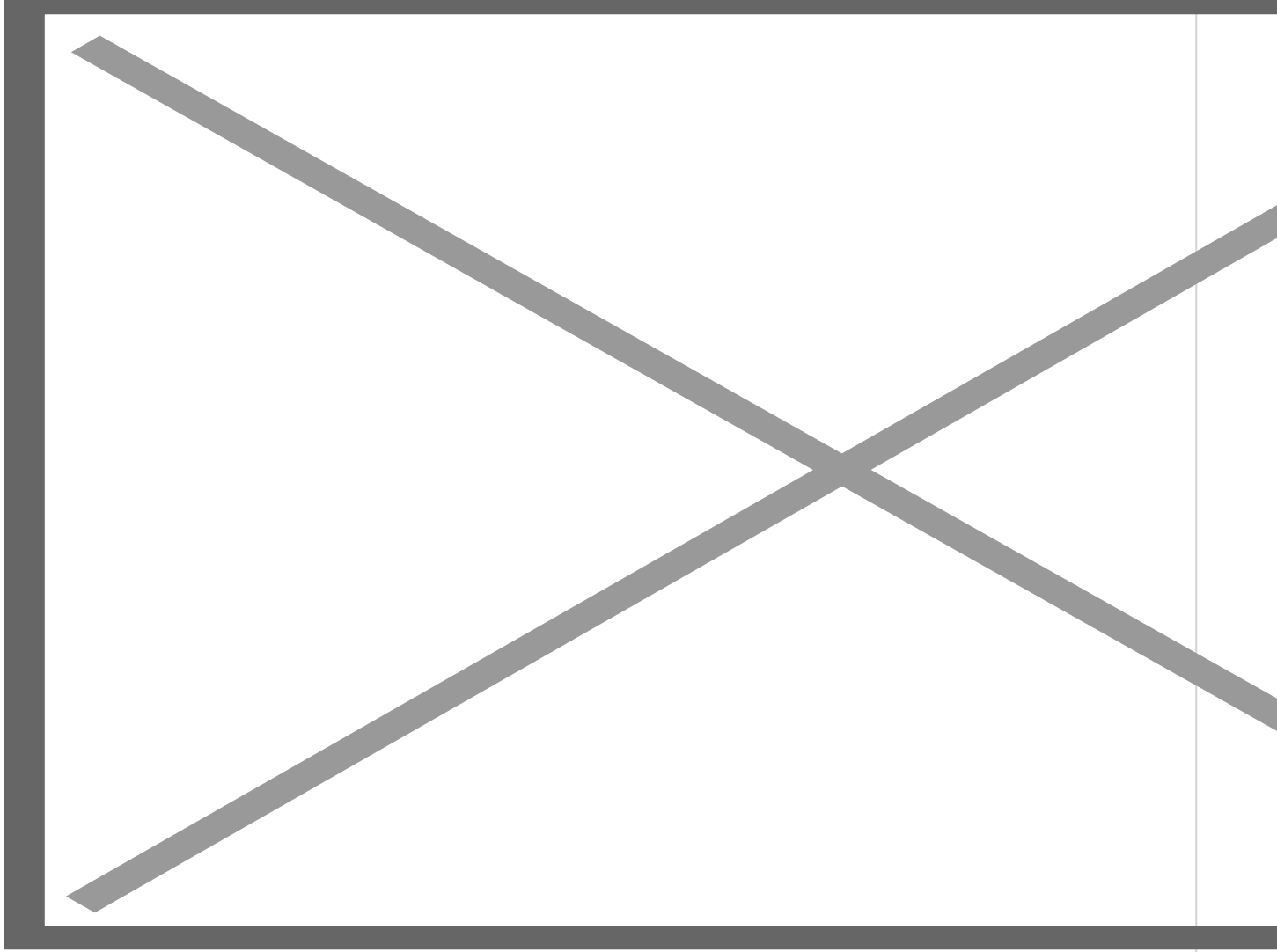
The clearance of the aircrew, as the NYT reported, was based on a review of the inquiry findings by Air Mobility Command and US Central Command, which was announced shortly after the incident on August 16 last year.

Videos of the tragic incident, recorded by Afghan news media, were widely shared on social media and showed desperate Afghans, escaping the country after the Taliban took over Kabul, trying to climb onto the exterior of the U.S. C-17 cargo plane and falling from it following takeoff. It remains unclear how many people lost their lives in the incident.

The situation in Afghanistan aggravated in the aftermath of the withdrawal of the U.S. forces, who invaded the country more than two decades ago to topple the Taliban in response to the September 11 attacks in the United States.

The Taliban took over the capital on August 15, 2021. The militants entered the presidential palace only hours after President Ashraf Ghani fled the country.

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Afghans fall to their deaths after letting go of the U.S. C-17 cargo plane following take off.

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