

## F-15E Lands Safely in Japan After Losing Wheel During Taxi Operations

August 5, 2025

— Categories: Defence & Security



An F-15E Strike Eagle deployed to Kadena Air Base in Japan experienced a mechanical malfunction when its left rear wheel detached during taxiing, causing the aircraft to tilt before coming to a controlled stop. No injuries or damage to surrounding personnel or infrastructure were reported.

The incident occurred on August 4 during routine ground movement. According to officials from the 18th Wing, the aircraft was not taking off or landing at the time. The dislodged wheel rolled off into a grassy area near the taxiway, and emergency response teams secured the scene shortly afterward.

The aircraft is part of a rotational deployment from the 336th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in North Carolina. Alongside other assets, including F-35As, the unit is supporting U.S. Indo-Pacific air defense operations as Kadena transitions away from its legacy F-15C fleet.

This is not the first tire-related issue at the base in recent months. In October 2024, two F-22 Raptors experienced separate tire failures, one during landing and another before takeoff. Both incidents concluded without injury or significant damage.

The F-15E involved in the incident has been removed from service pending inspection and maintenance review. Officials have not released details on what caused the tire to separate, but stated that a formal investigation is underway.

The event highlights ongoing challenges with high-tempo flight operations at Kadena, where aging airframes and increased rotational deployments place sustained pressure on maintenance crews and equipment. The Air Force has announced plans to modernize its presence in the region, including the arrival of new F-15EX Eagle II jets between 2026 and 2027 to replace the older F-15C models previously stationed there.

Despite the tire failure, the pilot was able to manage the situation without assistance from arresting systems or external intervention. Flight operations at the base resumed shortly after the aircraft was cleared from the taxiway.

The Air Force emphasized that safety remains a top priority as the investigation continues and future measures are considered to prevent similar incidents.