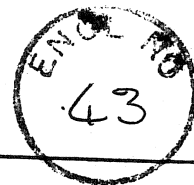




MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Military Aircraft Accident Summaries



11/87

21 September 1987

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT TO ROYAL AIR FORCE PHANTOM FGR2 XV434

Date: 7 January 1986
Parent Airfield: RAF Coningsby
Place of Accident: North Yorkshire Moors
Crew: Two
Casualties: 2 Major

CIRCUMSTANCES

1. A formation of 4 Phantoms was engaged in low level practice intercepts over the North Yorkshire Moors. Two of the aircraft were acting as fighters, and the others as targets. Whilst at low level, and after completing a practice attack on one of the targets, the pilot of the No 3 aircraft found that his control column moved forward and his aircraft responded with a 10° nose-down pitch. The pilot tried to counteract the movement, but a series of high speed, high G oscillations developed, forcing his head down to his knees. The pilot ejected, closely followed by the navigator; almost immediately afterwards the aircraft crashed into open moorland. The aircrew were rescued by helicopter after lying in the snow for just over an hour. Both had suffered major injuries. The navigator's parachute was partially burnt by the explosion of the crashing aircraft.

2. The subsequent investigation concluded that the most likely cause of the accident was a blockage in the aircraft's feel system bellows. The pilot re-trimmed the aircraft to take account of the new condition. When the blockage cleared, the aircraft's trim changed suddenly and the aircraft became uncontrollable.

SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS

3. Pre low-flying checks have been revised in respect of high performance sorties. Studies have been undertaken in connection with heat resistant parachute material. A new aircrew helmet is being investigated. Automatic operation of some survival equipment has been introduced.

CLAIMS

4. Claims totalling almost £900 have been settled, primarily in respect of damage to tracks and fields which occurred during the recovery of the aircraft wreckage.

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