



# MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

## Military Aircraft Accident Summaries

CLASS	8/76787
CLASS	623.746.656 7.08
CLASS	MOD PR
CLASS	16/5/83

MAAS 11/83

29 April 1983

### AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT TO ROYAL AIR FORCE JAGUAR GR1 XX122

Date:	2 April 1982
Parent Airfield:	RAF Coltishall, Norfolk
Place of Accident:	The Wash, near Hunstanton, Norfolk
Crew:	One
Casualties:	One killed

#### CIRCUMSTANCES

1. A Jaguar pilot was briefed to fly as No 3 of a 3-aircraft formation on a sortie to Holbeach range for weapon training. The formation was to rendezvous with a 4th aircraft which was already airborne and would then proceed onto the range as either a 4 aircraft formation or 2 pairs depending upon the weather conditions. The weather was known to be hazy, so the leader cautioned the pilots that the conditions would be conducive to disorientation and reminded them of the need to refer to instruments for attitude information.
2. The departure was uneventful and the formation made radio contact with the No 4. The visibility was 3 to 4 nms but it was very hazy with no distinct visual horizon. In transit, it became apparent that the haze would preclude a join up before reaching the range, so the leader held the 3 aircraft formation in the holding pattern at 1000 ft asl, while the No 4 prepared to run through the range alone to check the weather conditions.
3. As the No 4 approached a position abeam Hunstanton at 400 to 500 ft above the sea he saw the rest of the formation high and to his right; they passed ahead of him by 2 nm. As he passed beneath them he was aware of an aircraft banking away from the formation and towards himself. At the same time the pilot of XX122 (the No 3) called that he was visual with the No 4 and would follow him through the range. The No 4 completed his overflight of the range; the No 3 did not. After several attempts to contact the No 3, the rescue services were alerted. The No 3 had crashed into the sea and the pilot had been killed.

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CAUSE

4. The wreckage was recovered and was subjected to an extensive technical investigation. All the evidence indicated that, prior to impact, XX122 was fully serviceable. A reconstruction of the final flight path of the aircraft showed that in the descending and accelerating turn towards the No 4, the pilot of XX122 could have been denied the normal visual cues to orientation because of the haze, and may have been unaware of his proximity to the sea. Although other causes, such as technical defect, birdstrike, or pilot distraction could not be positively eliminated, the most likely cause of the accident was that the pilot had become spatially disorientated in the hazy condition and had failed to maintain safe separation between his aircraft and the sea.

Issued by - Public Relations (Royal Air Force)  
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01-218-3253/4