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AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVOLVING ROYAL AIR FORCE JET PROVOST T5A XW288

DATE: 17 May 1982

PARENT AIRFIELD: RAF Linton-on-Ouse, near York

PLACE OF ACCIDENT: RAF Linton-on-Ouse

CREW: One

CASUALTIES: 1 Fatal

CIRCUMSTANCES

1. On the afternoon of 17 May 1982, after being correctly briefed and authorised, the pilot took off in Jet Provost XW288 to carry out 2 display practices in preparation for a forthcoming aerobatic competition. The pilot completed his normal and inverted handling checks and reported the cloud base over the centre of the airfield as 2900 feet to 3000 feet. After a discussion with his authorising officer in the ATC tower it was decided that the initial manoeuvre of the display sequence should be changed from a vertical roll to a loop in order to stay well clear of cloud. The pilot then commenced his display. Initially the sequence was well flown and proceeded uneventfully with no interference from the cloud. Towards the end of the display the pilot entered a barrel roll to the left; the first part of the manoeuvre was well flown but as the aircraft reached the inverted position at the apex of the manoeuvre the rate of roll slowed down and the rate of pitch increased. The aircraft assumed a near vertical nose-down attitude, heading some 90 degrees off the intended display line. The pilot attempted to pull the aircraft out of the dive but was unsuccessful and it struck the ground inside the airfield perimeter in a flat, slightly nose-down attitude at high speed. He received fatal injuries and the aircraft was destroyed. There were no other casualties.

CAUSE

2. There was no evidence of either a technical malfunction or an external influence which could indicate the reason for this accident. Although the cause must remain unknown, the pilot probably lost control of the aircraft at the apex of the barrel roll, possibly due to distraction or disorientation, and he was subsequently unable to recover the aircraft before it struck the ground.

CLAIMS

3. Claims totalling £650 (of which all but £25 has been paid) were received in respect of damage to a ladder and a motor cycle.

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