



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Military Aircraft Accident Summaries

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12 April 1985

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT TO ROYAL AIR FORCE

HARRIER GR3 XZ134

Date:	3 May 1983
Parent Airfield:	RAF Gutersloh, West Germany
Place of Accident:	Stormede, Garsehe, West Germany
Crew:	One
Casualties:	One major injury

CIRCUMSTANCES

1. On the morning of 3 May 1983, during an exercise field deployment, the pilot of Harrier XZ134 was scheduled to fly a formation attack sortie. Start up, taxi, pre-take-off checks and engine acceleration checks were all completed satisfactorily, but after a normal full power take-off, just as he was completing the transition to wing borne flight, the engine lost power. At this point observer on the ground saw several items fall from the aircraft; the nose of the aircraft then dropped and the pilot ejected at very low level. The aircraft crashed in open country and was destroyed.

CAUSE

2. Although the engine was badly damaged in the crash, careful examination established that the sudden loss of engine power had been caused by a weld joint which ruptured in the Combustion Chamber Outer Casing. This failure in the main pressure casing of the engine introduced a considerable overpressure in the engine compartment which was sufficient to detach the upper engine bay doors from the aircraft; these were the objects seen to fall from the aircraft before impact. The pilot had no alternative but to eject.

SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS

3. All Harrier engines were specially inspected for the possibility of similar failures but this accident appeared to have been the result of an isolated occurrence.

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CLAIMS

4. Following the crash a total of 6 claims were received although 2, for crop damage, were subsequently withdrawn. The remaining 4 were in connection with the attendance of the local Fire Brigade and for damage to a combined harvester and have been settled for in total sum of DM3600.

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