



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Military Aircraft Accident Summaries

13/86

8 Dec 86

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVOLVING ROYAL AIR FORCE CANBERRA B2 WK 162

Date: 8 Aug 85
Parent Airfield: Royal Air Force Wyton, Cambs
Place of Accident: Royal Air Force Alconbury, Cambs
Crew: 1 pilot, 1 navigator
Casualties: 1 slight injury

CIRCUMSTANCES

1. During take-off for a routine sortie a Canberra pilot sensed an apparent reduction in the aircraft's acceleration. On checking his airspeed indicator (ASI), the pilot saw that the indication had stopped at 110 knots. The navigator confirmed that his own ASI had also stopped at this figure.
2. As 110 knots is within the Canberra's safe stopping speed, the pilot decided to abort the take-off. However, despite maximum braking the pilot realised that the aircraft would not stop within the prepared runway over-run. He therefore retracted the undercarriage to slow the aircraft further.
3. The undercarriage did not retract symmetrically and the aircraft drifted and then slewed to port, demolishing an airfield landing aid and passing through two fences before coming to rest in a cornfield. An intense fire developed and the crew evacuated the aircraft, the navigator receiving a cut on the cheek. Fire crews quickly extinguished the fire but the aircraft was damaged beyond repair.

CAUSE

4. It was established that the aircraft had not suffered a loss of acceleration but that the ASIs had given false readings, leading to the crew to abandon the take-off at a speed greater than the safe stopping speed. The false readings were due to a defect in the Air Mileage Unit (a navigation aid). The cause of the defect was not positively identified but it was possible to exonerate RAF servicing procedures from blame.

5. The asymmetric retraction of the undercarriage was found to be due to shock overloads caused by retraction at higher than designed speeds.

SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS

6. All Air Mileage Units were removed from Canberra aircraft and are now being re-introduced in an improved form.

CLAIMS

7. A claim for £120 was settled in respect of damage to crops.

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