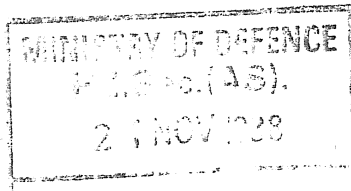




# MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

## Military Aircraft Accident Summaries



16/88

November 21, 1988

### AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT TO ROYAL AIR FORCE LIGHTNING F6 XR769

Date:	11 April 1988
Parent Airfield:	RAF Binbrook
Place of Accident:	North Sea, 5 miles off Easington, Humberside
Crew:	One
Casualties:	One slight

#### CIRCUMSTANCES

1. One the morning of 11 April 1988 the pilot of XR769 was carrying out a routine training mission as the No 2 of a formation of 4 Lightnings. The sortie proceeded without incident for the first 1 hr 30 min. At this point the pilot, having just cancelled reheat, slowly retarded the throttles in the cold power range. A series of loud bangs ensued and the pilot immediately advanced the throttles slightly and initiated a pull up in an attempt to clear the condition. However, the FIRE 1 caption illuminated and a small amount of fumes and smoke entered the cockpit but these quickly cleared. He declared a MAYDAY, continued a steep climb and closed down the No 1 engine. He requested a visual inspection from the formation leader and levelled the aircraft at approximately 10,000 ft heading towards Binbrook. The formation leader reported what appeared to be fuel venting from the aircraft.

2. When the aircraft was some 53 miles north east of Binbrook the FIRE 1 caption extinguished. However, the Formation leader reported a visible fire issuing from the port side of the fuselage above and aft of the Red Top drill round. The fire continued to spread and the pilot turned the aircraft away from the coast, completed his pre-ejection drills and initiated ejection. The pilot's ejection was successful and he was rescued by helicopter after only 15 minutes in the sea.

#### CAUSE

3. The Investigation considered that the evidence was sufficiently compelling to discount all but that of persistent fire and structural damage as a result of an uncontained failure of the No 1 engine following a severe surge as the probable cause of the accident. However, in the absence of any wreckage, a degree of conjecture was inevitable concerning the exact cause of the surge.

Issued by: Public Relations  
(Royal Air Force)  
Ministry of Defence  
Main Building  
Whitehall  
London SW1A 2HB

Tel: 01-218 3253/4