



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Military Aircraft Accident Summaries

9/90

12 June 1990

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT TO ROYAL AIR FORCE

HAWKS XX182 AND XX291

Date: 14 June 1989

Parent Airfield: RAF Valley

Place of Accident: 6mls NE Aberystwyth

Crew: One Each

Casualties: One Fatal and One Major

CIRCUMSTANCES

1. On 14 Jun 89, 3 Hawk TMk1s took off from RAF Valley to carry out a medium level close formation exercise as part of the advanced flying training course. The lead aircraft was flown by a Qualified Flying Instructor and the No 2 and No 3 aircraft were each flown by a solo student pilot.
2. The formation was flying in echelon starboard at FL100 and 300kts, when the leader initiated a turning rejoin exercise by flying a level break away from the formation to the left. He established a left hand, 45° angle-of-bank turn and the No 2 carried out a similar break 3 secs after the leader and was followed, after a further 3 secs, by the No 3. As the No 2 commenced his rejoin on the leader, he appeared to establish a closing line that was slightly more swept than the ideal. He crossed to the outside of the turn at a range of 150 - 200 yds, and went out of the field of view of the No 3, who was concentrating on his own rejoin. Some 5 - 7 seconds after crossing behind the leader's aircraft, the No 2 collided with the No 3. The No 3 pilot ejected successfully and his aircraft crashed on a steep wooded slope 8 kms south east of Machynlleth in Wales. The No 2 pilot made no attempt to eject and was killed in the accident. His aircraft crashed in open farmland 6 kms north of Aberystwyth.

CAUSE

3. It was not possible to determine positively why the accident happened, but the most likely reason was that the No 2, having crossed too early initially, instinctively came back towards the inside of the turn to close on the leader and collided with the No 3 aircraft, which would have been outside his immediate field-of-view. Students are taught that the No 2, once he has crossed to the outside of the turn, should remain there for the rest of the rejoin. The failure of the No 3 to maintain sight of the No 2 aircraft was a contributory cause.

SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS

4. The training programme for executing the turning rejoin manoeuvre has been reviewed and some minor amendments have been made to the guidance for instructors and students.

CLAIMS

5. Claims to the value of some £8,130 have been settled as a result of damage caused by this accident.

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