



# MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

## Military Aircraft Accident Summaries

2/91

21 January, 1991

### MILITARY AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT SUMMARY

#### AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT TO ROYAL AIR FORCE

##### PHANTOM XV402

Date:	30 April 1990
Parent Airfield:	RAF Wattisham
Place of Accident:	RAF Valley
Crew:	Two
Casualties:	1 Minor

#### CIRCUMSTANCES

1. On 30 April 90, a Phantom FGR2 returned to RAF Valley, where it was temporarily based, as part of a 4 aircraft formation. Before landing, the Pilot briefed his Navigator that he intended landing firmly due to the lack of headwind, the length of runway available and the relatively high ambient temperature of 22°C (all factors which would increase the landing roll-out distance). The subsequent landing was firm, although not excessively heavy, but the port mainwheel tyre burst immediately upon touchdown.

2. The tyre came off the rim and the wheel began to gouge into the runway, wearing itself away in the process. A few seconds later orange flames were seen coming from the port side of the aircraft and extending for some 20 or 30 feet behind. The Pilot and Navigator were unaware that a tyre had burst until Air Traffic Control informed them.

3. The Navigator saw, in his mirrors, that the port underside of the aircraft was engulfed in flames and, hearing Air Traffic Control's call of "On Fire", he informed the Pilot and ejected. Meanwhile, the Pilot decided to stay with the aircraft and he was able to maintain directional control without difficulty.

4. The aircraft came to a halt at the intersection of runways 32 and 19, close to firecrew who had previously deployed for an earlier, unconnected incident. The fire was extinguished almost immediately. The aircraft had sustained damage to the left main leg, wing, flap and aileron and the left under-wing fuel tank and wing tank were punctured. There was a gouge, near the threshold of the runway, several metres long and superficial damage along the length of the ground roll of the aircraft.

#### CAUSE

5. The accident was caused by the deflation of the left main tyre, and subsequent break up of the left mainwheel, shortly after touchdown. The cause of the tyre deflation could not be positively determined, but the tyre burst its sidewall almost immediately after landing, probably due to an undetectable flaw in the tyre.

#### SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS

6. The aircraft is currently awaiting repair, although this may be reviewed in light of the future of the Phantom fleet.

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