



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Military Aircraft Accident Summary

6/91

10 July 1991

MILITARY AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT SUMMARY

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT TO ROYAL AIR FORCE

PHANTOM XV462

Date: 8 January 1991
Parent Airfield: RAF Wildenrath
Place of Accident: 15nm South of RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus
Crew: Two
Casualties: 2 Minor

CIRCUMSTANCES

1. A detachment of Phantom aircraft from RAF Wildenrath was at RAF Akrotiri holding Quick Reaction Alert in support of Operations in the Gulf. XV462 was the lead aircraft of a pair programmed to fly a routine Practice Intercept sortie finishing with Air Combat Training. Shortly after take-off, the lead pilot turned in behind his No2 aircraft to effect his radar checks. During the manoeuvre he lost control of his aircraft and the pilot and navigator ejected. The aircraft crashed into the sea and the crew, who suffered only very minor injuries, were rescued by helicopter.

CAUSE

2. The accident was caused by the pilot's mishandling of his aircraft. He manoeuvred his aircraft at relatively low speed without reference to its angle of attack and was, therefore, unaware that he had entered a critical part of the flight envelope where exclusive use of rudder, rather than aileron, is needed to roll the aircraft; he attempted to roll out of the turn, mistakenly using the ailerons. The aircraft would not respond to his control inputs and departed from controlled flight. With the

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bank increasing and in a steep descent, the pilot ordered his navigator to eject at 3000 feet. There is no angle of attack gauge in the rear cockpit, so the navigator, who was not aware of the exact nature of his pilot's problem, was not able to offer advice to assist in recovering the aircraft.

SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS

3. The aircraft was completely destroyed in the accident. The training of RAF Germany Phantom aircrew has been reviewed in light of the accident. The frequency of slow speed handling training for pilots on their first tour has been increased from once to twice a year, and similar training has been introduced for navigators. All crews have been reminded of the unique handling characteristics of the Phantom aircraft at high angles of attack and the accident is being given widespread publicity within the Service.