

MILITARY AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT SUMMARY

ROYAL NAVY (HARRIER T MK 4N XW268)

Date:	27 June 1994
Parent:	899 Naval Air Squadron
Place of Accident:	RNAS Yeovilton
Crew:	2 pilots
Casualties:	None

CIRCUMSTANCES

1. The aircraft was programmed to carry out a general flying practice sortie comprising circuit and V/STOL training for the benefit of a junior front-line pilot undergoing a period of refresher flying training. Following an uneventful launch and departure into the circuit, the aircraft was identified and marshalled for a Precision Approach Radar "talk-down" to land. The aircraft settled initially on the glide path before sinking below and remaining so for the remainder of the approach, parallel but below the glide path. As the pilot was content with the more than satisfactory visual cues, he chose not to correct the situation, accepting that this would cause him to land slightly short. During the final stages of the approach, the aircraft's rate of descent increased; the pilot selected an increase in power to overcome this unexpected sink and cushion the touchdown and executed a firm landing.

2. After touchdown, the aircrew became aware of an airframe vibration and a reduction in braking characteristics. Suspecting burst main tyres, the instructor pilot took control and used engine power to slow the aircraft and steer clear of the main runway onto the grass to stop the aircraft. Minor damage was caused to the starboard wing and the aircrew vacated the aircraft uninjured.

CAUSE

3. Subsequent investigation revealed that the aircraft had in fact struck the rounded leading edge of the runway with sufficient force to remove the main undercarriage.

SUBSEQUENT ACTION

4. Two safety recommendations were made following the AIU investigation covering operational aspects of this incident with particular reference to the inherent dangers of landing short.