



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Military Aircraft Accident Summary

MILITARY AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT SUMMARY

OF RAF BOARD OF INQUIRY

Aircraft:	Hawk T1W XX288
Date of Accident:	10 August 1995
Place of Accident:	Mona airfield, Anglesey
Casualties:	1 minor

Synopsis

1. A Royal Navy student pilot was carrying out a solo training sortie which included a number of circuits at RAF Mona when, after touching down during the final circuit, the aircraft veered to the left and departed the runway. He ejected safely but, almost immediately afterwards, the aircraft became airborne again and crashed into open farmland nearby. The Inquiry concluded that the accident was caused by the student pilot's attempt to take off from an area where there was insufficient distance to do so safely.

Background

2. The pilot was an ab-initio Royal Navy student, who was around a quarter of the way through his advanced flying training at RAF Valley. Hawk aircraft from RAF Valley regularly use Mona airfield, which is a Relief Landing Ground. The student pilot had successfully practised a similar sortie that morning with a RAF Qualified Flying Instructor (QFI) and was then briefed for a solo flight.

Circumstances

3. The weather conditions were good with no significant cloud, good visibility and a slight wind. The student had completed the initial part of the sortie, which involved general handling at medium level, and was carrying out practice landings at Mona airfield. As he lowered the aircraft's nose on touching down during the final circuit, the aircraft veered slightly to the left. Attempts to correct this were unsuccessful and, realising that the aircraft would shortly veer off the runway, the student applied full power in order to attempt to take off again. However, just before the aircraft left the runway, the student decided to abandon the take off, only to change his mind again and re-apply power to continue. At this point, fearing that the aircraft could neither take off nor stop before reaching the airfield boundary fence, the pilot ejected. The aircraft then became airborne again and climbed for thirty seconds to about 1,000 feet before crashing in nearby farmland.

Rescue/Salvage operation

4. The Air Traffic Controller at Mona alerted RAF Valley and a RAF Wessex Search and Rescue helicopter was scrambled. The student made his own way to Mona Air Traffic Control from where he was subsequently picked up by the helicopter and transferred to hospital, where he was found to have sustained only minor ejection injuries.

Aircraft Damage

5. The aircraft caught fire on impact and was destroyed. The wreckage was, however, recovered for examination by the Inquiry.

Investigation

6. The Inquiry was able to draw on a wide range of evidence, including the pilot's report, eyewitness statements and the Accident Data Recorder. It determined that directional control of the aircraft had been lost because the port tyre had burst 200 ft down the runway from the touchdown point, but could not positively determine why this had happened. The Inquiry considered that the student was right to attempt a take-off after the tyre had burst and that his decision to abandon the take-off as soon as it became clear that the aircraft would veer off the runway was also correct. The Inquiry concluded, however, that that he was wrong to re-apply power, and it was this action that ultimately caused the accident. As a result, the student was found negligent to a minor degree.

Safety recommendations

7. Modification of the Hawk braking system to give it some form of protection on touchdown is being considered.