



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Military Aircraft Accident Summary

Aircraft:	Tornado ZA466
Date of accident:	18 October 1990
Parent Airfield:	RAF Marham
Place of accident:	Tabuk, Saudi Arabia
Crew:	Two
Casualties:	2 Major

Circumstances

1. The crew of ZA466 were part of a formation which took off for an Operation Granby night training mission from Tabuk, in Saudi Arabia. Whilst flying low-level, the aircraft experienced technical difficulties with its electronic sensors and returned to base. The weather at the airfield was fine with good visibility and a light wind. The pilot aligned the aircraft with the runway at a range of 10 miles and, with the aircraft configured for landing, made his approach using navigational aids and visual cues. When satisfied that he would land safely, well down the runway, he allowed the aircraft to descend to achieve a touchdown slightly beyond the beginning of the runway.

2. Just before touchdown, the navigator noticed the top of the raised net barrier illuminated by the aircraft's landing lights. Almost immediately the aircraft experienced a sudden rapid deceleration and pitch down, resulting in the nosewheel striking the runway before the main wheels, causing the noseleg to collapse and bursting the left tyre. The crew saw smoke and flames in the cockpit area and sparks under the nose. When the aircraft began to slew off the runway the pilot initiated a successful ejection for himself and his navigator. Both crew members sustained major injuries.

Cause

3. The cause of the accident was that the main undercarriage caught in the raised barrier during a normal approach to land. Net barriers located at the touchdown end of a runway should normally be in the down position whilst aircraft are using that runway.

Subsequent Actions

4. The aircraft is currently under assessment for repair.