

FLGOFF A.J. OUAIFE 0323353

EJECTION A3-36

DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS.



The sortie as briefed and flown as the lead aircraft of a pair (Classic Magpie) acting as an enemy air threat for a four aircraft Strike/Escort package. The aircraft and engine exhibited no abnormal behaviour prior to the incident.

On sortie completion, following a visual approach through the initial point for runway 11, the aircraft was rolled from downwind into the base turn. About 7500RPM was selected as the



base turn was initiated and, as airspeed approached 190kt, power was reapplied to maintain 190-200kts. A positive check of RPM was not made at this time. Incidence of the aircraft at this time was felt to be Amber/flickering Red and the aircraft was balanced in skid.

At this stage (about 1/4 way around the base turn) a rumbling vibration commenced which initially felt similar to flying through the wash of a preceding aircraft. The vibration was both heard and felt and was accompanied by a loss of thrust.

The noise of the vibration had replaced ,but was at a lower volume, than the engine noise. A compressor stall was suspected. RPM was checked to be decreasing through 7000 and was last seen at about 6700 decreasing.

A Mayday was declared to Darwin Tower using the Transmit button on the throttle, whilst the aircraft was rolled and trimmed wings level and confirmed heading towards a clear area.



Ejection was initiated via the seat-pan handle on completion of the Mayday transmission. Altitude was not positively checked but assumed to be between 800 and 1000ft (QNH).

No attempt was made to arrest the rate of descent. However about a 2000 fpm rate of descent is believed to have been maintained with decreasing airspeed.

No further fault finding was conducted prior to ejection and

indicated T4 was not checked. The Main Fail light was not illuminated and the Main Fail Panel was not checked. The throttle position was not altered at any time after the commencement of the vibration.

Ejection was initiated with the right hand whilst the left hand gripped the right wrist. Initial ejection posture was believed good. Canopy jettison occurred immediately and the delay for seat initiation seemed much longer than the advertised one second. As a result, ejection posture was relaxed just prior to the seat firing.

The firing sequence of the seat was clearly felt to be progressive which allowed tension of the neck muscles in an attempt to maintain posture. The ride in the seat was quite disorienting with the seat apparently rotating slowly forwards during rocket motor burn.



On parachute deployment, the abandoned aircraft was observed to be still flying, wings level, on ejection heading.

Attention was then diverted to releasing the survival kit from the harness, however, the quick release connectors did not fall

immediately to hand and so the attempt was abandoned to prepare for the imminent landing.



An attempt was made to roll sideways on landing but the rate of descent and the forward speed of the parachute prevented any degree of finesse. The landing was made on reasonably firm

sand/mud at the edge of a mangrove area and at the water's edge.

After recovering breath, the parachute harness was released and helmet/oxy mask removed and visual signals were passed to the circling aircraft. The SAR Flt Helo arrived in what seemed to be no more than about 10-12 minutes.



