BN2T Islander, G-WOTG

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Aircraft Type and Registration:	BN2T Islander, G-WOTG
No & Type of Engines:	2 Allison 250-B17C turboprop engines
Year of Manufacture:	1982
Date & Time (UTC):	12 June 1997 at 1045 hrs
Location:	RAF Weston-on-the-Green, Bicester, Oxfordshire
Type of Flight	Royal Air Force Sport Parachute Association
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 - Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None - Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Minor damage to the sliding door
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilot Licence
Commander's Age:	52 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	7,062 hours (of which 231 were on type)
	Last 90 days - 69 hours
	Last 28 days - 47 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and AAIB telephone enquiries

This aircraft was being used for the dropping of sport parachutistsand was fitted with a sliding door on the left side of the cabin,in accordance with the manufacturers approved modification. Onthe fourth flight of the day the last two students were dropped,followed by the jumpmaster, at a height of 3000 feet leaving thepilot the sole occupant of the aircraft. The sliding door isretained in the forward position by a spring latch which may bereleased by the operation of an internal red painted handle accessibleto the pilot, behind and to the left of his seat. Upon his releaseof the door it reportedly slid back under the influence of theslipstream as intended but, on reaching full travel, over-travelledthe 'stop block' located at the lower rear corner of the dooraperture. The corner of the door then over-rode the fairing tubeattached to the aircraft's skin, thereby inducing some distortionin the door, which allowed it to detach from the aircraft. Thedoor fell to earth close to the centre of the drop zone, sustainingminimal damage, and the aircraft then landed safely.

The aircraft was subsequently flown to a maintenance organisationat a nearby airfield, where the door was repaired and re-fittedto the aircraft. It was apparent that a small degree of wear,effectively

a chamfer, was present on the outer edge of the stopblock. After this symmetrical block was re-fitted to the aircraftbut turned through 180° to present a fresh 'stop' face, andthe door runner blocks had been re-shimmed to reduce verticalplay, the aircraft was returned to service. A supplement to theaircraft's Flight Manual included information on operation withthe sliding door modification. This stated that the door maybe moved from open to the closed position at speeds up to 90 ktIAS, and that the aircraft may be flown to a maximum speed of130 kt with the door open.