

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Sukhoi SU29, HA-YAO	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Vedeneyev M-14 PF piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1999	
Date & Time (UTC):	26 June 2011 at 1335 hrs	
Location:	Rougham Airfield, Suffolk	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	None	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	68 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	1,297 hours (of which 200 were on type) Last 90 days - 30 hours Last 28 days - 13 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and further enquiries by the AAIB	

Synopsis

Immediately after takeoff, the aircraft drifted to the right of the runway, crossing a line of parked aircraft, two of which it struck with its tail wheel.

History of the flight

HA-YAO took off from grass Runway 27 at Rougham Airfield with its smoke system on. Surface wind was reported as southerly at 12 kt. After lifting off, the aircraft drifted north of the runway towards a line of parked aircraft lying parallel to the runway and a crowd of people beyond¹. Its tail wheel struck two of

the parked aircraft and the aerodrome radio operator in the mobile control room sounded the crash alarm. The aircraft climbed into the circuit where a visual inspection was carried out by a pilot in another aircraft who reported seeing no damage. HA-YAO landed back at the airfield without further incident.

Information from witnesses

The mobile control room was situated north of Runway 27 approximately two thirds of the way along its length in line with the parked aircraft. The radio operator in the mobile control room saw HA-YAO takeoff and veer to the north. She sounded the crash alarm because she lost sight of the aircraft as it crossed

Footnote

¹ An airshow was taking place at the airfield. HA-YAO was not planned to display.

the line of parked aircraft. She stated that the aircraft passed north of the mobile control room “at a very low level” before climbing into the circuit. She was asked by the Senior Airfield Fire Officer (SAFO) to ask the pilot to remain airborne until the local authority emergency services joined the airfield fire service on site in case there was a problem on landing. While she was calling the emergency services, the aircraft landed.

The SAFO was located next to the mobile control room and, when he realised the aircraft was landing, he ensured all personnel drew back from near the runway where they had been searching for debris.

The pilot reported that, because he is unable to see over the nose of the aircraft during takeoff, he normally keeps straight on the runway by looking at features to the left of the aircraft. In this case he was looking at a fence to the left of the runway during takeoff. After lift-off he “heard a thump from the tail” and, as he climbed into the circuit, informed the aerodrome radio

operator that he thought he might have hit something. Following the visual inspection, the pilot decided to land back on Runway 27 as soon as possible. He did not think he had flown over the crowd and stated that, as the aircraft climb attitude is 30° nose-up and its climb rate is over 4,000 ft/min, he believed its height when it passed the mobile control room would have been at least 800 ft. He stated that the smoke system was turned on unintentionally.

Pilot’s assessment of cause

The pilot considered that a combination of crosswind and a swing to the right caused by the propwash had caused the aircraft to drift right. He also believed that the fence had been an unsuitable feature to help him keep the aircraft straight during the takeoff. Although he heard the request to remain airborne, the pilot thought it prudent to land as soon as possible because he thought there might have been damage to his aircraft that had been missed during the visual inspection.