

**PART 1.8
REVIEWING AUTHORITY
COMMENTS**

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COMMENTS BY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AIR COMMAND

1. The Service Inquiry Panel (SIP) has completed an extremely thorough investigation of a very tragic accident, and has provided comprehensive recommendations. I therefore accept the Panel's determination of the cause of the accident.
2. Air Cadet Air Experience Flying (AEF) has, historically, been a safe operation; however, this accident, and the subsequent fatal Tutor accident, has highlighted the additional responsibility placed on us to ensure that the risks to air cadets, when flying, are as low as reasonably practical. Whilst the panel has confirmed that operations were being appropriately conducted and supervised, it has rightly made recommendations regarding potential improvements to practices, procedures and equipment employed.
3. Turning to those recommendations, I am in broad agreement with the findings of the Panel. I note that procedures have already been put in place to provide better deconfliction between participating AEF aircraft, and I look forward to seeing the outcome of the review of RAF lookout training. I note that the provision of Collision Warning Systems (CWS) has again featured as a recommendation in a SI; the potential technical and financial issues associated with the procurement of a CWS are well documented, but it is obvious that such equipment could prevent similar accidents in the future and I wholeheartedly support the Convening Authority's positive reaction to the recommendation. Conversely, whilst the provision of Air Data Recorder (ADR) and Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) equipment for the Tutor Fleet would have made investigation and analysis of the accident easier, they would not have prevented the accident occurring. The recommendation to provide ADR/CVR will therefore require careful consideration, given the considerable financial outlay involved; this same consideration is also true with regard to the re-design of the canopy frame. Finally, I note that the limitations of the digital Human Factors (HF) post, within the RAF Centre for Aviation Medicine, has been the subject of adverse comment by a number of Service Inquiry Panels, and I am aware that the provision of another HF psychologist is already under consideration. I fully support the Panel's and the Convening Authority's comments on this matter.
4. In sum, I am grateful to the Panel for completing this investigation into a very tragic accident with diligence and speed. I note, throughout this complex investigation, the particularly high level of cooperation between the Panel, the civilian police authorities and the AAIB. In the interim, there has been no perceptible change to the desire of cadets for AEF sorties, which is gratifying and confirms that flying remains a highlight of Air Cadet activities. We must, however, ensure that it continues to be provided in the safest manner possible. Clearly, it is deeply regrettable that there are any accidents; this event is particularly sad, and I extend my deepest sympathy to the families of those who lost their lives. Looking now to the future, the wide-ranging review of Cadet Flying, which I initiated, and the subsequent implementation of its recommendations, will help to ensure that such flying can continue to be carried out with confidence.

{Signed on Original}

Sir Chris Moran
Air Chief Marshal
Commander-in-Chief
Air Command

14 October 2009