

INCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	1) Bolkow 207, D-EFQE 2) North American T-6 Harvard 4, G-BJST
No & Type of Engines:	1) 1 Lycoming O-360 A1A piston engine 2) 1 Pratt & Whitney R-1340-AN-1 piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1) 1965 (Serial no: n/k) 2) 1953 (Serial no: MM53795)
Date & Time (UTC):	25 July 2019 at 1030 hrs
Location:	RAF Odiham, Hampshire
Type of Flight:	1) Private 2) Private
Persons on Board:	1) Crew - 1 Passengers - 1 2) Crew - 1 Passengers - None
Injuries:	1) Crew - None Passengers - None 2) Crew - None Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	1) Minor damage to rudder, elevators and doors 2) None reported
Commander's Licence:	1) Light Aircraft Pilot's Licence 2) Airline Transport Pilot's Licence
Commander's Age:	1) 72 years 2) 63 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	1) 1,722 hours (of which 350 were on type) Last 90 days - 5 hours Last 28 days - 5 hours 2) 27,000 hours (of which 320 were on type) Last 90 days - 180 hours Last 28 days - 60 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Synopsis

Following an apparent propwash incident on the ground, the pilot of a Bolkow 207 reported aircraft handling problems during the subsequent flight. The aircraft landed safely, but the tension of the control cables for the rudder and elevators was found to be out of limits.

History of the flight

A Bolkow 207 was parked on the dispersal apron at RAF Odiham during a visit for the Station's Families Day. The pilot reported he had fitted rudder and elevator gust locks but had left the doors open on the aircraft to assist in ventilating the cockpit in the warm weather. During the day he noted a strengthening breeze blowing from the opposite direction to the way the aircraft was parked, so he returned to the apron with the intention of turning the

aircraft into wind. As he approached, he saw a Harvard taxi in and park tail to tail with his aircraft, then increase its engine rpm for a short period before shutting down. The pilot of the Bolkow reported that the propwash created by the Harvard overcame the gust locks on his aircraft, however at the time he assessed any damage as superficial and took no further action.

Later in the day the pilot of the Bolkow took off for the return flight to his home airfield. He reported issues with the control response of the elevators during the flight and requested a straight-in approach to land. The remainder of the flight was uneventful, and the aircraft landed safely.

Further inspection of the aircraft identified a loss of tension in both the rudder and elevator control cables, but no obvious associated damage. The aircraft had undergone an annual maintenance check the week prior to the incident, where the cable tensions were recorded as within limits.

Conclusion

Based on the information available, it was not possible to determine whether the loss of tension in the Bolkow 207's control cables and the subsequent handling problems were a direct consequence of encountering propwash from the Harvard during the ground incident. There are however, some general safety issues which are highlighted by this occurrence.

The first is that pilots should always have an awareness of their surroundings, particularly when using increased engine rpm, to minimise the risks associated with propwash. The second issue is that pre-flight full and free checks of the control surfaces are an essential part of confirming the airworthiness of an aircraft prior to flight and it is important to check the control surfaces are responding correctly to control inputs. Finally, when an incident occurs where there is the possibility of damage to an aircraft, this should be assessed by a suitably qualified maintenance person prior to further flight, as the damage and its severity may not be immediately obvious.