

# REPORT ON AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

A.A. 25 — (Sheet 1)  
(Reprinted 1957)

TO SEA VENOM FAW 53 WZ 900  
(Aircraft Type and Number)

FROM: The Commanding Officer HMAS MELBOURNE

DATE: 28 April 1966 Ref. No. 4/66  
TO: The Secretary, Department of the Navy.  
(Copies to: FOCAF(FLAG); FOICEA;  
NAS NOWRA)

Former D.T.G. Month APRIL 281146Z  
Signal Report (if any) Originator HMAS MELBOURNE  
Addresseees FOCAF(FLAG); INFO ACNB;  
FOCAF(R/L); COMFET; FOICEA;  
NAS NOWRA

1. Aircraft Parent Unit  
Squadron 816 'B' FLIGHT  
Air Group,  
Ship or Station HMAS MELBOURNE

2. Date of Incident 28 APRIL 1966 Time 0701Z  
Site (a) Name of Ship or Air Station from which aircraft operated HMAS MELBOURNE  
(b) Place of accident, if not (a) 08 12 NORTH 118 17 EAST  
(c) If ship, whether at sea or in harbour AT SEA

3. Squadron Commander's Report.

As briefing officer Lt. DaCosta carried out a thorough briefing of all members of the flight before launch.

Both Lt. DaCosta and Lt. Kennell were experienced and competent in Venom aircraft and both assessed as above average aviators.

Signature of Sqdn. Cdr.  Lieutenant Commander. RAN.

4. Details of Aircraft.

Details	Airframe	S/No <u>649451</u> E.C.U.		Category of Damage
		Single <del>XXXX</del>	Submark <del>XXXX</del>	
Type and Mark <u>SEA VENOM FAW 53</u>	<u>WZ 900</u>	<u>DH GHOST</u>		<u>ZZ</u>
Total Hours run or flown (as applicable) .....	<u>646:45</u>	<u>35:15</u>		<u>ZZ</u>

5. Ship or Station Air Engineer Officer's Report.

This accident was not the result of a technical defect within the aircraft itself.

20 MAY 1966

FILE No. 09/4/54

(a) Result of examination of relevant documents..... Correct

(b) What defect reporting action is being taken?..... Nil

6. Remarks of Captain of Ship or Parent Station:

- (1) Cause of accident, including contributory factors.
- (2) What remedial action has been taken locally as result of this accident?
- (3) Recommendation to higher authority to prevent recurrence.
- (4) Any further remarks (including any disciplinary action taken).

1. Failure of the port knuckle of No. 2 wire, when the knuckle struck the anchor fishplate of the port bowspring of No. 3 arrester wire, during pullout.

2. Centre span length has been increased by 5 feet on No. 2 wire, to reduce the risk of the knuckle striking the fishplate.

- 3. (a) Bow spring fishplate should be made flush, with the deck.
- (b) A design study, to investigate the feasibility of an unbroken profile knuckle assembly, be carried out.

4. I concur with the findings of the Accident Investigation Officers, whose report is enclosed.

Although this accident is attributed to a severe shock causing a failure of the knuckle it is not clear if this failure was due to design weakness, material failure or human error. Every endeavour should be made to determine by tests the most probable cause of the failure. Such tests are beyond the capacity of HMAS MELBOURNE and it is recommended that Defence Standards Laboratories be asked to investigate.

The SAR helicopter crew showed commendable presence of mind and very good reaction to the emergency. Lt Cdr Hillier assessed the situation when he saw crew in the water, and his decision to concentrate on Lt Kennell first, and the technique adopted was sound. The aircrewman jumped from about 40 feet and it was unfortunate that on his surfacing, the body of Lt Kennell had disappeared from his sight. It is possible that in this situation a qualified diver if carried might have recovered the body. Clarification of the issues which at present preclude the use of SAR divers should be expedited.

No disciplinary action has been taken.

Signature of Captain.....

**W. D. C. WILSON**  
CAPTAIN, RAN.

Enclosures (Delete those not included)

A.25 (Sheet 2).

Medical Report

Emergency Parachute Descent

~~Force of Alighting on Sea~~

Meteorological Report

~~Fire Report~~

Other Specialist Officer's Report

Witnesses Statements

Other Enclosures... **Accident Investigation Report.**

... **Photographs. Cine film.**

Deferred Reports (Delete those not being rendered)

~~Board of Inquiry~~

~~ALQ's Report~~

~~Engine Technical Report (N62421)~~

Other Reports.....