



Civil Aviation Authority

SAFETY NOTICE

Number: SN-2018/004



Version 2: 28 June 2021

Version 2 of this Safety Notice has been published to add clarification. Where AAES systems have been rendered inert (e.g. by removal of time-expired pyrotechnic cartridges), an aircraft level modification must be approved.

Emergency Parachutes in Ex-Military Jets

This Safety Notice contains recommendations regarding operational safety.

Recipients must ensure that this Notice is copied to all members of their staff who need to take appropriate action or who may have an interest in the information (including any 'in-house' or contracted maintenance organisations and relevant outside contractors).

Applicability:	
Aerodromes:	Not primarily affected
Air Traffic:	Not primarily affected
Airspace:	Not primarily affected
Airworthiness:	All BCAR A8-23 / A8-24 / A8-25 Organisations
Flight Operations:	All General Aviation Pilots, All Display Pilots and CAP 632 Operators
Licensed/Unlicensed Personnel:	All Maintenance Engineers, All Flying Display Directors and Event Organisers

1 Introduction

- 1.1 A number of straight wing Ex-Military Jets are permitted to operate on the UK civil register with the ejection seats deactivated (inert) in accordance with the requirements of the applicable Airworthiness Approval Note (AAN). These include Hunting Percival Jet Provost, de Havilland Venom and de Havilland Vampire aircraft.
- 1.2 In most cases the ejection seats are equipped with integral parachutes which may still be required to be used in the event of an emergency. As the seats are declared inert (INOP) there could be confusion as to whether these parachutes are maintained in a serviceable condition. Additionally, the parachute may be difficult to detach from the seat, don and deploy.
- 1.3 Since the original AANs were written, these aeroplanes could have changed owners and maintenance organisations many times. It is known that seats have been activated or deactivated dependant on the availability of components and operator preference.
- 1.4 The purpose of this Safety Notice (SN) is to remind the owners and operators of Ex-Military Jets that they ensure, where the ejection seats have been disabled, the alternative method of emergency egress has been incorporated in the pilot information, the procedure has been verified and that all the required equipment is maintained in a serviceable condition.

- 1.5 This situation has been highlighted by the discovery, in service, of an integral seat parachute which was older than the airframe to which it was fitted (in service since 1962).
- 1.6 Further to the above, where AAES systems have been rendered inert (e.g. by removal of time-expired pyrotechnic cartridges to comply with MPD 2018-003), an aircraft level modification must be approved to include the required revisions to operational procedures/pilots' notes, maintenance procedures/programmes etc. It is not sufficient to simply remove the unserviceable components. Operators must inform the CAA when an aircraft is modified to operate with "inert" ejection seats instead of "live" ejections seats and vice-versa (refer to CAP 632 Chapter 5)

2 Compliance/Action to be Taken

- 2.1 Owners and operators of Ex-Military jets should review the emergency egress instructions and equipment against the current version of the AAN to ensure that:
 1. All equipment required for emergency egress is serviceable and scheduled maintenance is included in the aircraft maintenance programme, including calendar lives where appropriate.

Note: Calendar life means the original manufacturers' recommended life or approved life in the relevant Air Publication (A.P.) or equivalent.
 2. The Aircrew Manual and the Flight Reference Cards reflect both the operational state of the seats and the status of the canopy jettison system.
 3. The procedures for emergency egress in the Aircrew Manual supplement and the Flight Reference Cards have been verified.
 4. The aircraft configuration when first approved for a Permit to Fly is reflected in the approved AAN. A deviation from this configuration is a modification which should be appropriately approved. This would include inerting or re-activating any AAES. Further information on modifications can be found on the CAA website, [Modifications and Repairs | UK Civil Aviation Authority \(caa.co.uk\)](#)

3 Further Information

- 3.1 Ex-military Jet – this means an aeroplane powered by turbojet engines and which falls within the definition mentioned in paragraph (d) of Annex I to UK Reg (EU) No. 2018/1139: *"aircraft that have been in the service of military forces, unless the aircraft is of a type for which a design standard has been adopted by the CAA"*.
- 3.2 [CAA Publication CAP 632](#): Operation of 'Permit-to-Fly' ex-military aircraft on the UK register
- 3.3 [CAA Publication CAP 1640](#): Ex-Military Aircraft Design, restoration and continuing airworthiness approval
- 3.4 [CAA MPD 2018-003](#): Ex-Military Aircraft fitted with Aircraft Assisted Escape Systems: Pyrotechnic Component Life Limitations

4 Queries

- 4.1 Any queries or requests for further guidance as a result of this communication should be addressed to the GA Unit, Safety Airspace Regulation Group, Civil Aviation Authority, Aviation House, Gatwick Airport South, West Sussex RH6 0YR.

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5 Cancellation

- 5.1 This Safety Notice will remain in force until further notice.