DA 40 NG, G-CTSR: Anniversary Statement

News story

Runway overrun after attempted go-around, Cranfield Airport, Bedfordshire, 3 September 2021.

This statement provides an update on the ongoing AAIB investigation into an accident involving DA 40 NG aircraft, G-CTSR, which overran the runway during an attempted go-around at Cranfield Airport, Bedfordshire, on 3 September 2021.

While flying a visual circuit, the student pilot elected to go around because the approach was unstable. During the go-around, the aircraft descended as it flew along the runway and subsequently struck the perimeter hedge, coming to rest in an adjacent field. The pilot sustained minor injuries.

The investigation is complete and the final report into the accident is expected to be published later this year.

Published 5 September 2022

UK Armed Forces continue to strengthen interoperability with Finland and Sweden

Press release

British troops have taken part in Exercise Vigilant Knife alongside Swedish and Finnish Armed Forces.

British troops have taken part in Exercise Vigilant Knife alongside Swedish and Finnish Armed Forces, further strengthening our interoperability in anticipation of Sweden and Finland's accession to NATO.

The short notice command-post exercise took place in Rovaniemi and Rovajärvi, northern Finland from 29 August to 2 September 2022 and built on the success of Exercise Vigilant Fox which took place in July.

Secretary of State for Defence Ben Wallace said:

> Whilst there is war in Europe, it is more important than ever to strengthen our international partnerships. We welcome Finland and Sweden's application to join NATO and will continue to exercise together so we are ready to face shared security challenges.
>
> Exercise Vigilant Knife is an invaluable opportunity for UK personnel to develop their skills and experience of warfighting in cold weather conditions, enabling them to be effective on the battlefield alongside their Finnish and Swedish counterparts.

Around 80 British Army personnel from C Company, 2 Rifles Battlegroup took part in the exercise, travelling from the island of Santahamina in the south of Finland where they are undertaking a 3 month training deployment as part of a security agreement between the UK and Finland.

Formed of over 2,000 troops, the international force practiced delivering and receiving international assistance as well as enhancing tactical and technical interoperability.

As a light infantry company, British personnel provided anti-tank, sniper and reconnaissance capabilities to the exercise and were primarily involved in both offensive and defensive actions to test the readiness of the Finnish forces alongside the Swedish unit.

This added to the invaluable experience that UK troops have already enjoyed whilst on deployment in Finland. Operating in northern Finland presented

new challenges enabling troops to train in heavily wooded terrain.

Enhancing our forces through international exercises is crucial preparation should we need to deploy alongside our European partners in the future, enabling us to be effective on the battlefield.

Published 4 September 2022

UK Armed Forces continue to strengthen interoperability with Finland and Sweden

Press release

British troops have taken part in Exercise Vigilant Knife alongside Swedish and Finnish Armed Forces.

British troops have taken part in Exercise Vigilant Knife alongside Swedish and Finnish Armed Forces, further strengthening our interoperability in anticipation of Sweden and Finland's accession to NATO.

The short notice command-post exercise took place in Rovaniemi and Rovajärvi, northern Finland from 29 August to 2 September 2022 and built on the success of Exercise Vigilant Fox which took place in July.

Secretary of State for Defence Ben Wallace said:

> Whilst there is war in Europe, it is more important than ever to strengthen our international partnerships. We welcome Finland and Sweden's application to join NATO and will continue to exercise together so we are ready to face shared security challenges.

> Exercise Vigilant Knife is an invaluable opportunity for UK personnel to develop their skills and experience of warfighting in cold weather conditions, enabling them to be effective on the battlefield alongside their Finnish and Swedish counterparts.

Around 80 British Army personnel from C Company, 2 Rifles Battlegroup took part in the exercise, travelling from the island of Santahamina in the south of Finland where they are undertaking a 3 month training deployment as part of a security agreement between the UK and Finland.

Formed of over 2,000 troops, the international force practiced delivering and receiving international assistance as well as enhancing tactical and technical interoperability.

As a light infantry company, British personnel provided anti-tank, sniper and reconnaissance capabilities to the exercise and were primarily involved in both offensive and defensive actions to test the readiness of the Finnish forces alongside the Swedish unit.

This added to the invaluable experience that UK troops have already enjoyed whilst on deployment in Finland. Operating in northern Finland presented new challenges enabling troops to train in heavily wooded terrain.

Enhancing our forces through international exercises is crucial preparation should we need to deploy alongside our European partners in the future, enabling us to be effective on the battlefield.

Published 4 September 2022

JCVI advises use of additional bivalent vaccine for autumn booster campaign

Press release

Published advice updated to include an additional bivalent vaccine now approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

Following on from the previous advice on which vaccines should be used in this year's autumn booster programme, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has updated its published advice to include an additional bivalent vaccine now approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

Studies indicate the Pfizer-BioNTech bivalent vaccine produces a marginally higher immune response against some variants than the Pfizer-BioNTech mRNA Original 'wild-type' vaccine. The clinical relevance of these small differences is uncertain

'Bivalent' vaccines have been developed by global manufacturers since the emergence and dominance of the Omicron variant. These vaccines are targeted against antigens (substances that induce an immune response) from 2 different COVID-19 strains, or variants.

All of the available booster vaccines offer very good protection against severe illness from COVID-19. As more vaccines continue to be developed, the committee will consider their use in the autumn programme.

Professor Wei Shen Lim, Chair of COVID-19 immunisation on the JCVI, said:

> It is very encouraging that more vaccines continue to become available and we now have another option to add to the vaccines already advised for the autumn booster campaign.
>
> Winter is typically the time of greatest threat from respiratory infections. We strongly encourage everyone who is eligible to have their booster vaccine this autumn when it is offered. This is our best defence against becoming severely ill from COVID-19.

Published 3 September 2022

Pfizer/BioNTech bivalent COVID-19 booster approved by UK medicines regulator

Press release

The adapted COVID-19 vaccine targets both the original virus and the Omicron variant

A second, “bivalent” vaccine has today been approved as a booster by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) after it was found to meet the UK regulator’s standards of safety, quality and effectiveness.

The updated booster vaccine made by Pfizer/BioNTech, targeting two coronavirus variants, has been approved for use in individuals aged 12 years and above. This decision has been endorsed by the Commission on Human Medicines, after a careful review of the evidence.

In each dose of the booster vaccine, ‘Comirnaty bivalent Original/Omicron’, half of the vaccine (15 micrograms) targets the original virus strain and the other half (15 micrograms) targets Omicron (BA.1).

The MHRA’s decision is based on data from a clinical trial which showed that a booster dose with the bivalent Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine triggers a strong immune response against both Omicron and the original strain. Safety monitoring showed that the side effects observed were the same as those seen for the original Pfizer/BioNTech booster dose and were typically mild and self-resolving, and no new serious safety concerns were identified.

Dr June Raine, MHRA Chief Executive said:

> I am pleased to announce that we now have a second approved vaccine for the UK Autumn booster programme. The clinical trial of the Pfizer/BioNTech bivalent vaccine showed a strong immune response against the Omicron BA.1 variant as well as the original strain.

> Bivalent vaccines are helping us to meet the challenge of an ever-evolving virus, to help protect people against COVID-19 variants.
>
> We have in place a comprehensive safety surveillance strategy for all UK-approved COVID-19 vaccines, and this will include the updated booster we approved today.

Professor Sir Munir Pirmohamed, Chair of the Commission on Human Medicines said:

> Following an independent review of the safety, quality and effectiveness of the vaccine, the Commission on Human Medicines and its COVID-19 Vaccines Expert Working Group supports the MHRA's decision.
>
> As with any medicinal product, including vaccines, it is important to continually monitor effectiveness and safety when it is deployed, and we have the relevant processes and expertise in this country to do that.
>
> The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) will advise on how this vaccine should be offered as part of the deployment programme.

Notes to Editors

- The Commission on Human Medicines (CHM) advises ministers on the safety, efficacy and quality of medicinal products. The CHM is an advisory non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department of Health and Social Care.
- This new authorisation to the Conditional Marketing Authorisation (CMA) granted by the MHRA is valid in Great Britain only and was approved via the European Commission (EC) Decision Reliance Route. This is when the marketing authorisation application made by the company references the decision made by the EMA's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP). In such cases, the MHRA considers the application together with due consideration of the EC decision, before making an independent decision on the quality, safety, and effectiveness of the vaccine.
- More information can be found in product information for the Pfizer/BioNTech bivalent vaccine.
- A recent paper in a Lancet journal suggested that COVID-19 vaccines have prevented up to 20 million deaths in the first year of use.

Published 3 September 2022