

SERIOUS BIRDSTRIKE ACCIDENTS TO MILITARY AIRCRAFT OF MANY COUNTRIES: ADDITIONS AND KNOWN TOTALS

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Abstract

A total of 286 serious bird-related accidents to military aircraft were listed in our three earlier papers concerning accidents to aircraft from 32 countries during 1950-1999 (BSCE 22/WP21; IBSC 23/WP2; IBSC 25/WP-SA1). Serious accidents were those where an aircraft was destroyed or damaged beyond repair, or people were killed. At least 63 of the 286 accidents were fatal, with at least 141 deaths. The countries considered included most of those in Europe (east to Russia), Israel, Canada, U.S.A., Australia, and New Zealand. Records for almost all of these 32 countries were incomplete to varying degrees. IBSC 25/WP-SA1 also mentioned ~67 similar accidents for a few countries in Asia (especially India), Africa, and South America. Data for those continents were very incomplete and largely unofficial. Even so, reported bird-related accidents in all countries totaled ~353 for 1950-1999.

This paper will document additional birdstrike accidents to military aircraft in 2000-2002, previously-unreported accidents in 1950-1999, and further details for some previously-reported accidents. The circumstances of each "new" accident will be listed, and updated totals will be provided by country, decade, and aircraft type. Based on preliminary data, we know of ~20 serious military accidents in 2000-2002 that were definitely or possibly caused by birds, plus ~15 "new" birdstrike accidents in 1950-1999. Aircraft from the 32 "primary" countries accounted for 14 of these 2000-2002 accidents, and 6 "new" 1950-99 accidents. These data are largely unofficial. We are seeking confirmation and other data from military Flight Safety Offices and other authoritative sources. The completed Working Paper will incorporate the updated data. Present data suggest that the total number of serious military accidents reported for 1950-2002 will be >300 in the 32 "primary" countries, and >80 in the few other countries for which limited data are available, for a total of >380 known serious accidents (many fatal). Actual numbers of bird-related military accidents and fatalities in 1950-2002 were undoubtedly much greater than the (incomplete) documented numbers.

Key words: military aviation, mishap investigation, risk assessment, reporting, statistics, fatalities, by country, Europe, North America, Asia, Africa, South America, aircraft type, history