

BIRD STRIKE COMMITTEE EUROPE

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BIRDSTRIKES, GERMAN AIR FORCE 1974-1975

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Birdstrikes German Air Force 1974/1975. By Dr. J. Hild, GAF

On the picture you see the development of birdstrikes in GAF during 1974/1975. The absolute number of strikes didn't increase or decrease but the relative number related to 10000 flying hours decreased from 5.3 (1974) to 5.0 (1975) for total number of birdstrikes and from 3.8 (1974) to 3.0 (1975) for the number of inflight birdstrikes.

As to the months, we have partly conspicuous differences between 1974 and 1975 depending on weather situation which influences bird movements. For instance, the mild winter weather in January/February 1975 favoured bird migration, cold weather in springtime (April) 1974 hindered bird movements whereas in April 1975 bird migration was in motion. In August the influence of dryness or moisture and therefore the food for birds is important for movements; in August 1975 we had a moist time and 1974 we had dry periods so that bird migration began in late summer. The same tendency is to observe for September.

The most conspicuous difference in total and inflight number of birdstrikes is to see in March. In this month (1975) we tried a new method for evaluation of bird movement information and publishing birdtam. This method consisted in the fact that we had, round the clock, 2 fully briefed biologists who followed bird movements on maps and analyzed weather reports. So it was possible to publish more detailed birdtam for special areas, to give special amendments and analysis of bird movement tendencies.

As to the birdstrikes on airfields we have a small increasing in absolute numbers but a nearly same number related to number of movements; only 10-15% of strikes induced damages as small birds have been involved. So it seems we succeeded in changing the ecological conditions on airfields.

At the round airfield birdstrikes we had a positive development especially caused by removal of garbage dumps and changing agricultural use in the surrounding of the airfields.

During flight - low level - we found the a.m. positive development in the relative rate 3.8 (1974) to 3.0 (1975).

Very informative is the development of birdstrikes related to damages; since 1970 the values of birdstrikes without damages are increasing, we believe this tendency can be declared by the fact we catch a large part of tall bird's movement by radar and publish birdtam but are not able to observe small bird's movement and single birds in low altitudes. In 1974/1975 there didn't happen accidents caused by a birdstrike, but also informative and interesting will be the fact that in 1974 engines were touched by birds at 37 incidents and in 1975 only in 9 cases.

As to the aircraft-types we observed 1975 a slowly increasing number of birdstrikes for the F 104 and F 4 as well as for helicopter (especially CH 53) but decreasing numbers for all other types.

As to the bird species gulls caused the most strikes followed by small birds, buzzards, starlings, crows and lapwings.

	Take Off/Landing	Round Airfield	Inflight	With Damage	Without Damage	Total
JANUARY	1974 1975	2 3	2 4	2 5	3 4	5 9
FEBRUARY	1974 1975	1 4	3 9	2 5	3 9	5 14
MARCH	1974 1975	1 0	19 6	13 4	11 5	24 9
APRIL	1974 1975	0 4	8 21	9 17	6 16	15 33
MAY	1974 1975	3 3	17 4	14 5	7 7	21 12
JUNE	1974 1975	1 4	12 11	11 8	4 12	15 20
JULY	1974 1975	6 7	11 16	11 10	11 16	22 26
AUGUST	1974 1975	6 6	21 11	9 5	27 18	36 23
SEPTEMBER	1974 1975	7 1	18 12	13 6	15 10	28 16
OCTOBER	1974 1975	4 4	20 33	15 13	18 29	33 42
NOVEMBER	1974 1975	2 3	3 4	6 4	5 3	11 7
DECEMBER	1974 1975	0 1	0 3	0 3	1 1	1 4
TOTAL	1974 1975	32 = 14.8% 36 = 16.7%	134 = 62.5% 134 = 62.3%	105 = 48.6% 85 = 39.5%	111 = 51.4% 130 = 60.5%	216 215