

AIRPROX REPORT No 2011102

Date/Time: 30 Jul 2011 1545Z (Saturday)

Position: 5436N 00542W (0.5nm FIN
APP RW16 Newtownards -
elev 9ft)

Airspace: ATZ (Class: G)

Reporting Ac Reported Ac

Type: Vigilant C172

Operator: HQ Air (Trg) Civ Pte

Alt/FL: 150ft↓ 300ft↓
QFE (1020mb) QNH

Weather: VMC CLBC VMC CAVOK

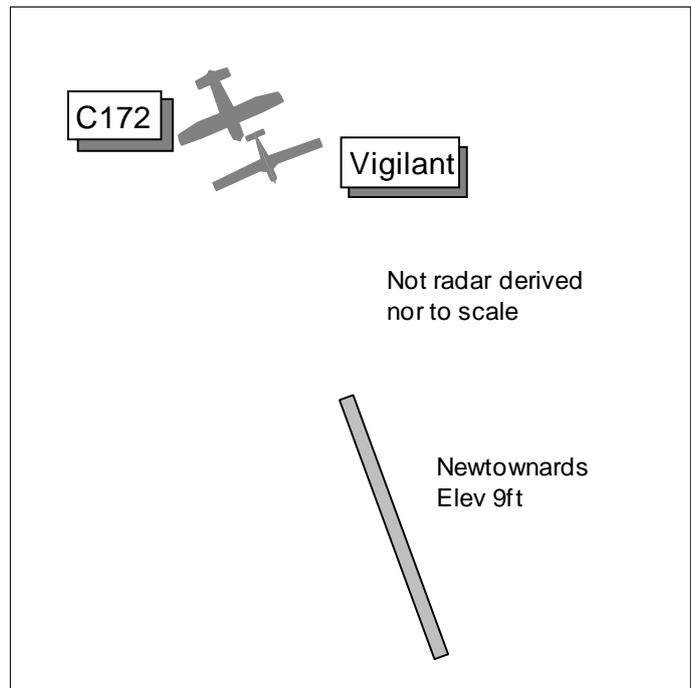
Visibility: 5000m 10km

Reported Separation:

20ft V/10ft H 25ft slant

Recorded Separation:

NR



PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

THE VIGILANT PILOT reports flying a dual training sortie from Newtownards, VFR and in communication with Newtownards Radio on 128.3MHz, squawking 7000 with NMC. The visibility was 5000m flying clear below cloud in VMC and the ac was coloured white with red/orange markings with nav, landing and strobe lights switched on. He was teaching an engine failure exercise and after climbing away from a practice EFATO (landing ahead) on RW16 he climbed onto the downwind leg, levelling-off at 1000ft. While downwind a C172 was overflying the RW at 1000ft and then shortly after turned downwind behind his ac. As he turned base leg he stated on the radio his intentions to carry out a low-approach and go-around. Before turning final he looked onto the downwind leg and noted the C172 was now downwind with another Cessna behind. He proceeded to turn final for RW16 at 65kt and the approach continued normally until approximately 150ft QFE 1020mb at which point a call was made on the radio in a stressed voice saying, "aircraft....maintain altitude". He looked behind and to the R where he spotted the black/gold coloured C172 approximately 10ft behind and 20ft below his ac. He shouted over the radio and immediately initiated a go-around while the C172 continued and landed on the RW. Had the C172 pilot not made the radio call or had he, the instructor, not looked around to the back of his ac when he did, he was confident that a collision could have resulted. On the go-around he contacted Newtownards Radio informing them of the near collision. He assessed the risk as high.

THE C172 PILOT reports inbound to Newtownards VFR and in receipt of an A/G service from Newtownards Radio on 128.3MHz, squawking 7000 with Mode C. The visibility was 10km in CAVOK VMC and the ac was coloured black/gold with anti-collision and strobe lights switched on. The cct was busy with various categories of ac and he had had to go-around on his first approach to RW16 owing to a M/Light ahead. His second approach was high and fast which was occupying his attention as it was a warm day and RW16 is short [displaced threshold 85m, LDA 533m]. He heard another ac's pilot call final but scanning ahead he could not see it. Heading 160° at 70kt descending through 300ft QNH he then saw a Grob M/Glider appear in the top LH corner of his vision about 100ft away descending in front of his ac in the 11 o'clock position. He heard its pilot "going around" and expected that the pilot would apply full power and climb away but he kept descending into his flightpath. He turned his Cessna abruptly R (deadside) with separation reduced to 25ft and the Grob continued upwind on RW heading. He landed his ac as the Grob climbed away. He assessed the

risk as medium. Later, after talking to the resident CFI, he learned that the Grob pilot had transmitted “low approach and go-around”. He had not heard the first part of the transmission owing to his pre-occupation with his approach. With hindsight he should have been more aware that the Grob has a slower and steeper approach than the C172 so he should have been looking above as well as ahead. He normally operated from an airport with ATC where separation is organised by the Tower but he recognised that in the A/G situation, responsibility for separation is totally down to the pilot.

ATSI reports that Newtownards do not record their frequency consequently it was not possible for ATSI to investigate this Airprox further.

NB: An AGCS radio station operator is not necessarily able to view any part of the aerodrome or surrounding airspace. TI provided by an AGCS radio station operator is therefore based primarily on reports made by other pilots. Information provided by an AGCS radio station operator may be used to assist a pilot in making decisions; however, the safe conduct of the flight remains the pilot’s responsibility.

HQ AIR (TRG) comments that this was clearly an alarming event for both crews. The limitations of operating without ATC are well known and this incident highlights how poor awareness, for whatever reason, can be dangerous. The C172 pilot’s open and honest assessment above is very welcome and usefully highlights the pitfalls from which hopefully he and others can learn. Unfortunately, the combination of flight profiles probably left the Vigilant pilot unsuspected on the C172 shortly after the start of his final turn.

UKAB Note (1): The UK AIP at AD 2-EGAD-1-3 promulgates Newtownards ATZ as a circle radius 2nm centred on the longest notified RW (04/22) 543452N 0054131W from SFC to 2000ft aal; aerodrome elevation 9ft.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available included reports from the pilots of both ac and a report from the appropriate operating authority.

Members agreed with the HQ Air Trg sentiments with respect to the C172 pilot’s report. After going around from his 1st approach he was obviously unsettled during his 2nd cct when the Airprox occurred. He did not see the Vigilant ahead of him in the cct pattern or assimilate its pilot’s RT calls. As a result of inadequate SA and being unsuspected on the Vigilant, the C172 pilot flew into conflict with it on final approach which had caused the Airprox. Having established on final approach, the C172 pilot was undoubtedly surprised when the Vigilant appeared in the windscreen in his 11 o’clock and above at close range. He expected the Vigilant to manoeuvre following its pilot’s call of “going around” but he then had to break R to avoid a collision when it continued its approach. The Vigilant pilot saw the C172 close behind and executed his go-around whilst broadcasting his intention on the RT. The Board were in no doubt that this had been a very close and serious encounter. Prior to the visual acquisition by both pilots, the low wing Vigilant was descending from above on to the high-wing C172, until a very late stage in the evolution. These elements were enough to persuade the Board that an actual risk of collision existed during this incident.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: The C172 pilot flew into conflict with the Vigilant on final approach.

Degree of Risk: A.