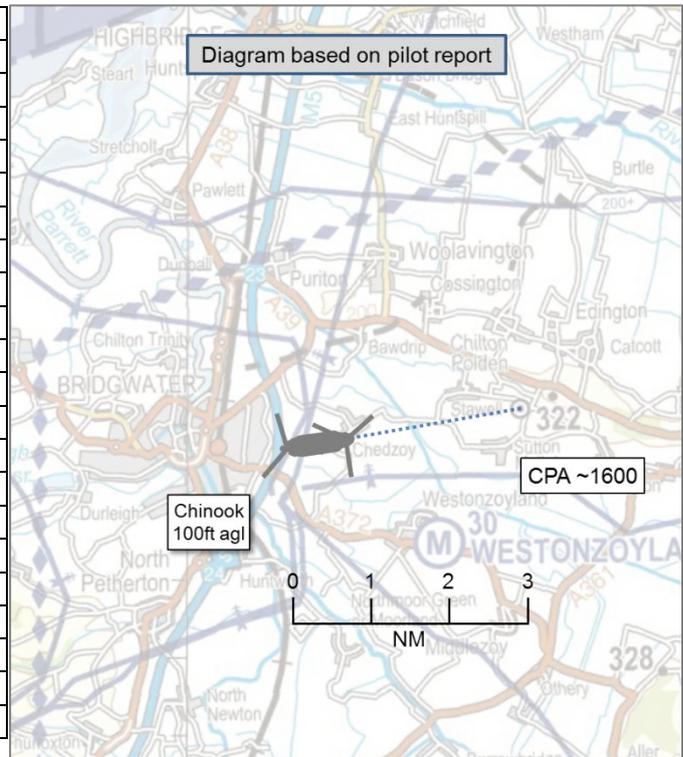


AIRPROX REPORT No 2016240

Date: 3 Nov 2016 Time: 1600Z Position: 5108N 00253W Location: 30nm SW Colerne

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

| Recorded | Aircraft 1 | Aircraft 2 |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Aircraft | Chinook | Model aircraft |
| Operator | HQ JHC | Unknown |
| Airspace | London FIR | London FIR |
| Class | G | G |
| Rules | VFR | |
| Service | None | |
| Altitude/FL | NR | |
| Transponder | A, C, S | |
| Reported | | Not reported |
| Colours | Green | |
| Lighting | NR | |
| Conditions | VMC | |
| Visibility | >10km | |
| Altitude/FL | 100ft | |
| Altimeter | agl | |
| Heading | 080° | |
| Speed | 120kt | |
| ACAS/TAS | Not fitted | |
| | Separation | |
| Reported | 30ft V/15ft H | |
| Recorded | NK | |



THE CHINOOK PILOT reports transiting to Colerne when the handling pilot saw rising ground ahead and started to climb the aircraft. Once the aircraft had completed the climb the No.1 crewman called that he'd seen a white fixed-wing model aircraft approximately 1m in length pass just above them. The location was noted and the grid reference passed onto Ops Staff. No model aircraft flying had been NOTAM'd in the area and no other crew members saw the model aircraft.

He assessed the risk of collision as 'Medium'.

THE MODEL OPERATOR: The model operator could not be traced.

Factual Background

The weather at Yeovilton was recorded as follows:

METAR EGDY 031550Z 13004KT 9999 FEW030 BKN045 10/07 Q1018 BLU NOSIG=

Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

All model operators are required to observe ANO 2016 Article 94(2) which requires that the person in charge of a small unmanned aircraft (a model aircraft) may only fly the aircraft if reasonably satisfied that the flight can safely be made, and the ANO 2016 Article 241 requirement not to recklessly or negligently cause or permit an aircraft to endanger any person or property.

A CAA web site¹ provides information and guidance associated with the operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UASs) and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and CAP722 (UAS Operations in UK Airspace) provides comprehensive guidance.

Comments

JHC

In the Low level environment some risks are unavoidable if realistic low flying training is to be conducted and a good lookout remains the only mitigation against this sort of Airprox. The model operator was within his rights to be flying his model and it was potentially the low flying and use of terrain masking that was a factor in preventing either the model operator or the Chinook crew having sufficient time to take any avoiding action. As to what effect a model aircraft with a 1m wingspan would have if the 2 had collided remains unknown.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a Chinook and a model flew into proximity at about 1600 on Thursday 3rd November 2016. The Chinook pilot was operating under VFR in VMC not in receipt of a service but listening out on the UHF low-level common frequency. The model operator could not be traced.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of a report from the Chinook pilot, radar photographs/video recordings and a report from the appropriate operating authority.

Members were informed that the Chinook did not appear on radar recordings, which members thought unsurprising considering the Chinook's altitude. It was considered regrettable that the model aircraft operator could not be traced, because without their narrative it was not possible to understand the situation from their perspective. Some members commented that the speed and low altitude of the Chinook was an operational measure designed to prevent detection and that this may have worked by denying the model aircraft operator the chance to fly his model away from the Chinook. The model aircraft operator was entitled to use Class G airspace and, outside the boundaries of a club or national event, members thought it unlikely that a NOTAM would be raised. Ultimately, the aircraft flew into conflict with each other and members agreed that, with the model passing over the Chinook and neither of its pilots seeing it, collision seemed to have been avoided by providence alone.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: A conflict in Class G airspace.

Degree of Risk: A.

¹ dronesafe.uk