



# AIRPROX *Insight*

DIRECTOR UKAB'S MONTHLY UPDATE

February 2019



## Location, location, location

**Are you absolutely sure you are where you've said you are?  
If not it can lead to heart-stopping moments — and not just for you**

There's a different bit of a theme that's cropped up in recent Airprox, the need for accuracy in passing information to Air Traffic Control. Two incidents, among others, highlighted this — a close encounter involving a Jetstream and a TB10 (**Airprox 2018211**) and another between a DHC-6 and a PA-28 (**Airprox 2018221**).

As with most incidents there were multiple factors at play, but it was notable that in both of these the pilots of the GA aircraft had passed inaccurate information that both ATCs (neither of which had radar) then used as they formulated a subsequently flawed plan.

In the first incident, the TB10 pilot

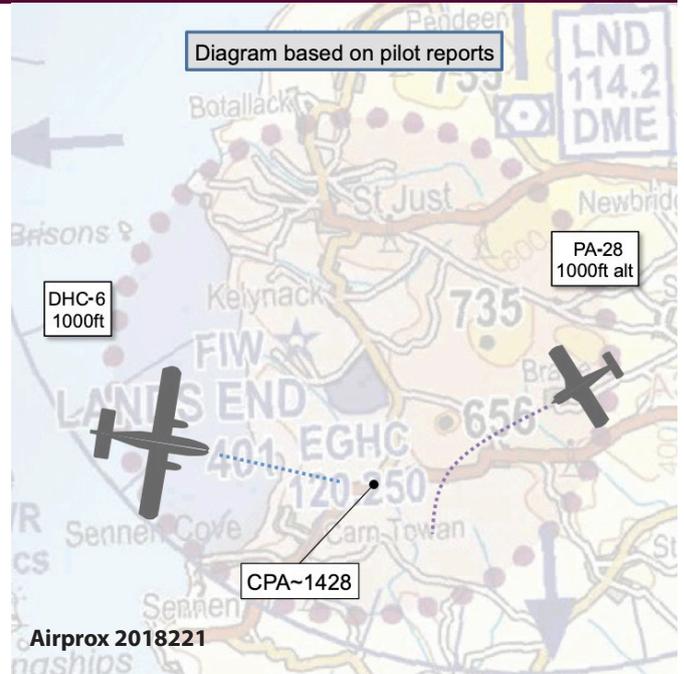
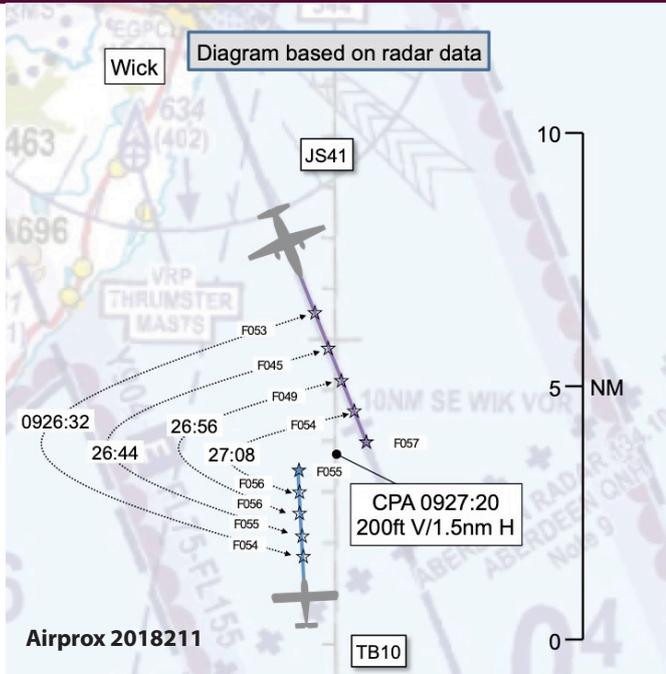
initially told Wick he was 10nm south of the field (heading north) when in fact he was 20nm away; this led to the controller thinking the TB10 would easily be through the Jetstream's southerly climb-out lane as it departed, when in fact the TB10 was still a factor.

In the second Airprox, the PA-28 pilot gave a time estimate of five or six minutes to arrival at Land's End, but actually arrived only about two minutes later. In the meantime, the controller had cleared the DHC-6 to left-base ahead, and both he and the DHC-6 pilot were concerned when the PA-28 then joined right-base.

Acknowledging that an estimate is just that, if it subsequently becomes obvious

that it's wrong then update ATC so that they can modify their plans accordingly. Fortunately, in both these incidents the commercial aircraft became visual with the other aircraft as they closed on each other and so more serious incidents were averted; however, heartbeats could have been saved both in the commercial cockpits and ATC if an accurate update had been made.

The need for accuracy in passing information to ATC is axiomatic; if unsure of your position, be up-front with ATC so that everyone understands that there is uncertainty and they can then factor that into their plans. Ultimately, no information is better than wrong information.



**UKAB MONTHLY ROUND-UP**

At the Board's January meeting 31 Airprox were reviewed, 11 of which were drone/sUAS incidents. Of the 20 aircraft-to-aircraft incidents, eight were risk-bearing (one was Category A where providence played a major part, and seven were Category B, where safety was much reduced through serendipity, misjudgement, inaction, or late sighting).

Subject to any further late submissions, there were 181 aircraft-to-aircraft incidents in 2018, slightly above the expected five-year average of 177. In contrast, there were 138 reported sUAS incidents, considerably more than 2017's 113.

This month's predominant theme was poor planning and execution by pilots (15 cases). Alongside this there were execution errors such as inattention to airspace (including two infringements and one level-bust); failure to integrate with or avoid aircraft in the visual circuit; inaction on sighting other conflicting aircraft; or flying closer than desirable to airfields.

The next most common theme was late- or non-sightings (ten incidents) which resulted in pilots either not taking any avoiding action at all because they didn't see the other aircraft, or only being able to take emergency avoiding action in response to seeing it at the last moment.

Late-/non-sightings are common during the busy summer months when there is more density of GA traffic in the see-and-avoid Class G airspace, and most of this month's reports were from flights that took place in August last year so the prevalence of this cause is unsurprising.

Although not a theme as such, there were four incidents this month where

flawed situational awareness led to pilots placing themselves in circumstances where there was a conflict. These included a lost student pilot flying through an ATZ, an Airprox in a visual circuit where both pilots and ATC had flawed situational awareness due to busy R/T, missed calls and dual transmissions, and the two Airprox mentioned in the Airprox of the month where pilots gave inaccurate position reports to ATC.

The Board made five recommendations during its meeting:

**AIRPROX RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2018162**

*Lasham and Farnborough liaise to discuss mutual operations*

**2018205**

*The CAA consider the inclusion of GPS based navigation in the PPL syllabus*

**2018216**

1. *The CAA review certification and licensing requirements for paramotor activities*
2. *BHPA publicise this incident*

**2018232**

*Boscombe and Thruxton to review their LoA*

The first recommendation stemmed from Airprox 2018162 where a B737 and an ASK 13 training glider came into proximity near Farnborough/Lasham. The Board is well aware there are ongoing discussions about airspace in the area but, nonetheless, it felt that Farnborough and Lasham could still benefit each other by maintaining a healthy

dialogue about day-to-day operations.

The second recommendation reflected an Airprox in which a student pilot was unable to work out how to use the GPS-based navigation system. Although there were other factors to consider, the Board felt it was high time that GPS navigation systems and techniques were introduced into the PPL syllabus.

The next two recommendations came from an incident where a paramotor pilot flew into controlled airspace. Although the paramotor pilot's skill level could not be determined because he could not be traced, it seemed there was a risk that, given the ease with which paramotors can be operated without any oversight by others, the CAA might benefit all by conducting a review of their licensing to ensure that, much as with upcoming drone regulation, there was a minimum requirement for at least some level of aviation knowledge.

The final recommendation was something of a niche concern regarding how pilots should depart Thruxton without causing concern to IFR aircraft on the approach to Boscombe Down.

Full details of the incidents can be found at [airproxboard.org.uk](http://airproxboard.org.uk) in the 'Airprox Reports and Analysis' section within the appropriate year and then in the 'Individual Airprox reports' tab. ■

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