



# AIRPROX *Insight*

DIRECTOR UKAB'S MONTHLY UPDATE

June 2019

AIRPROX OF THE MONTH



## Who's where?

### The better the information you give over the radio, the more help you might get

A Cessna 152 was routing via Dunkeld at 2800ft when the pilot spotted a PA-28 flying directly towards him about 40 metres horizontally and 30ft below. It was about 90° to his track and passed directly underneath, there was no time for avoidance and the 152 pilot felt a collision would have been inevitable had it been a little higher.

The pilot notified Scottish Information of the [Airprox \(2019018\)](#) having asked if they were aware of an aircraft in the area. Scottish Information then asked the PA-28 pilot what his position was, to which the reply was "Dunkeld". After being contacted by UKAB during the incident investigation it became clear that the PA-28 pilot hadn't seen the C152 at all.

This was a Category A incident (where

the aircraft missed each other largely due to providence) and both were in contact with Scottish Information under a Basic Service. The FISO knew they were in the same area but, based on the information they had, thought that the aircraft were more separated in time.

Ultimately, with both pilots under only a Basic Service, the FISO was not responsible for providing traffic information per se, but the Board felt there had been opportunities for better information flow both from the pilots to the FISO regarding their estimates for turning points, and from the FISO to the pilots regarding the presence of the other aircraft in the area.

The role of Scottish Information (and London Information) is often misunderstood, with some pilots under the impression that the FISO has a radar showing a

'God's-eye view' of the UK and will provide corresponding avoidance information (although I stress that the pilots in this case were not operating under that misconception).

Although the FISO may have a situational awareness display (that might or might not show some of the tracks depending on altitude), they don't use radar-based surveillance and are essentially simply sat at a desk maintaining a track-log based on pilot reports.

The FISO uses Flight Progress Strips (FPS) to record details of each flight, a printed VFR chart (and an electronic version is available), a weather radar and a Flight Information Display (FID) for situational awareness. Their role is primarily to assist pilots in navigating a safe flight by providing weather, airspace and airfield information on request, not to give Traffic Information. If the FISO becomes aware of 'unusual activity' in an area (defined as three or more plots observed in close proximity in the same geographic area) then

they might provide generic information about the other aircraft in the area using the terminology "I am aware that there is increased activity in the vicinity of [location]".

In this latter respect, the better the information you give (accurate route and turning-point estimates for example) the more the FISO can help and the more chance that other pilots might also hear what you are doing and perhaps modify their own plans accordingly. Even so, ultimately, it is still for the pilots to see-and-avoid each other rather than rely on the FISO to provide avoiding-action information.

Full details of the incidents can be found at the links within this note or 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.

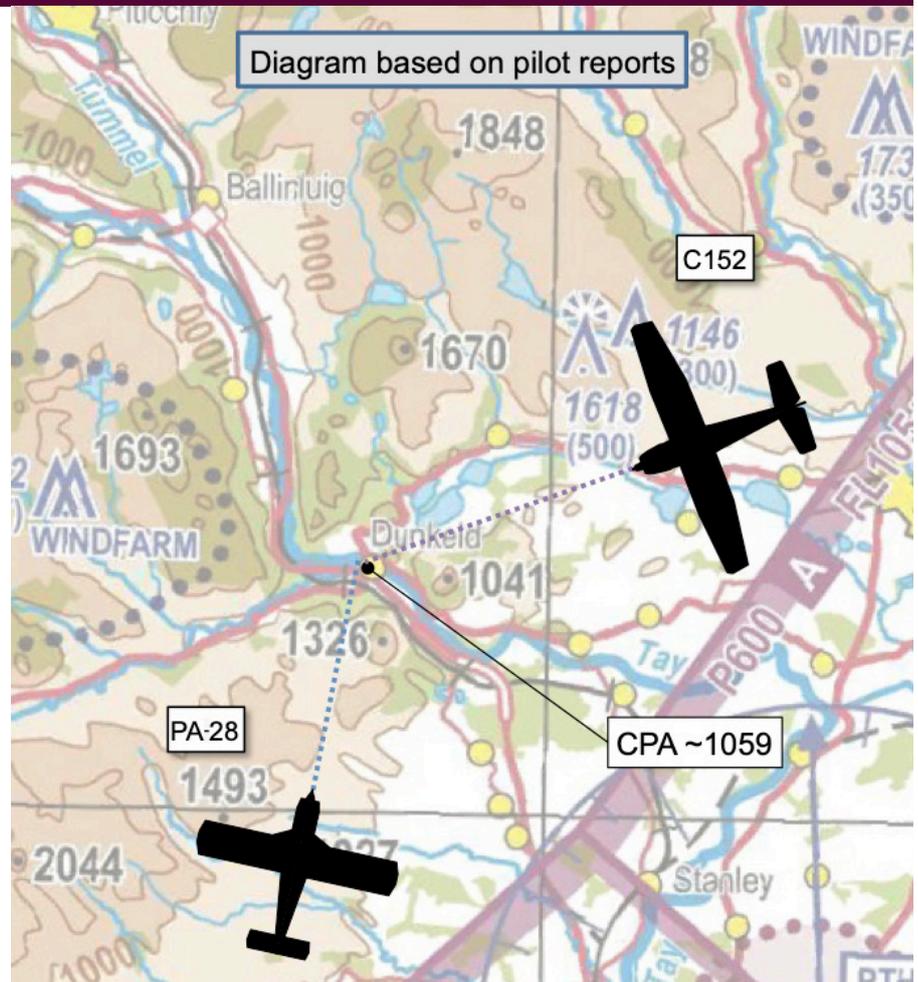
#### UKAB MONTHLY ROUND-UP

There were 32 Airprox reviewed at the Board's May meeting, of which 12 were SUAS incidents. Of the 20 manned aircraft-to-aircraft incidents, seven were assessed as risk-bearing (three were Category A and four Category B). The month of May produced increased rates of Airprox notifications, with overall numbers now indicating above the five-year average for both aircraft-to-aircraft and SUAS incidents.

The predominant theme revolved around inadequate communication or assimilation of information between controllers and pilots. Of the 13 associated incidents, four involved insufficient Traffic Information from ATC or controllers not sufficiently resolving a conflict; in another four the pilots didn't assimilate information that was available (mostly from R/T calls that other pilots had made); there were three examples of poor communication of intentions, and two incidents where pilots could have selected a more appropriate air traffic service.

In ten incidents late- or non-sightings were a factor, and there were seven incidents of inaction where pilots either did not act on the receipt of threat information when they could have, or simply failed to integrate with other aircraft they had been told were in the visual circuit.

Airprox in or near the visual circuit seemed common again this month; there were 11 events where aircraft came into conflict with others either in the circuit, joining the circuit or flying through the circuit. Most were simple misunderstandings or failures to assimilate information, but three were examples of pilots flying too close to the pattern of traffic at minor airfields without an ATZ (it seems that some pilots are still not careful enough in the planning or execution of their flight),



and two were examples of seeming 'air rage' where those who thought they had the right of way flew towards the other aircraft joining the circuit apparently to prove their point.

Although the 'who's ahead of whom?' debate is often a finely judged matter, the lesson is that sometimes the 'grey areas' of conflict resolution might not be as obvious to the other pilot as you might think, so self-preservation, courtesy and consideration for others dictates that allowances are made.

Even if you do think you have 'right of way', it is not appropriate to make the point by deliberately flying towards the other aircraft – widen or extend your own track as appropriate, and then talk about it afterwards in the clubroom once you've landed.

The Board made two recommendations.

#### 2019002

*Wellesbourne Mountford update their AIP entry to reflect the BRUNO approach.*

#### 2019004 & 2019008

*The CAA and MAA provide advice and guidance on the interpretation and use of electronic conspicuity equipment.*

The first resulted from the Board's discussions about an incident between two

Cessna 152s at Wellesbourne Mountford. One was on base-leg after joining overhead and the other was long-finals after joining straight-in from a locally developed and unofficial 'BRUNO instrument approach procedure'. The recommendation sought to clarify this procedure so that all pilots would be aware of it, codify associated radio calls, and offer guidance about how to integrate.

The second recommendation resulted from a couple of incidents where pilots received TAS/TCAS indications about the other aircraft but either did not act, or acted inappropriately, on this information.

It seemed to the Board that there is a lack of guidance about TAS/TCAS use and how best to interpret and react accordingly. Rather than interpreting what's being shown in the heat of the moment, some generic thoughts on various scenarios would be useful, as would guidance on the pros and cons of such systems (such as the inaccuracy of azimuth indications due to aerial installations for example) and what pilots can expect to receive in terms of alert algorithms etc. ■

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