

AIRPROX REPORT No 2010107

Date/Time: 12 Aug 2010 1401Z

Position: 5140N 00014W (3nm E
Elstree - elev 332ft)

Airspace: Lon FIR (Class: G)

Reporting Ac Reported Ac

Type: C150 PA46

Operator: Civ Pte Civ Pte

Alt/FL: 1300ft ↓ NR
(QFE 1003mb) (NK)

Weather: VMC CLBC VMC NK

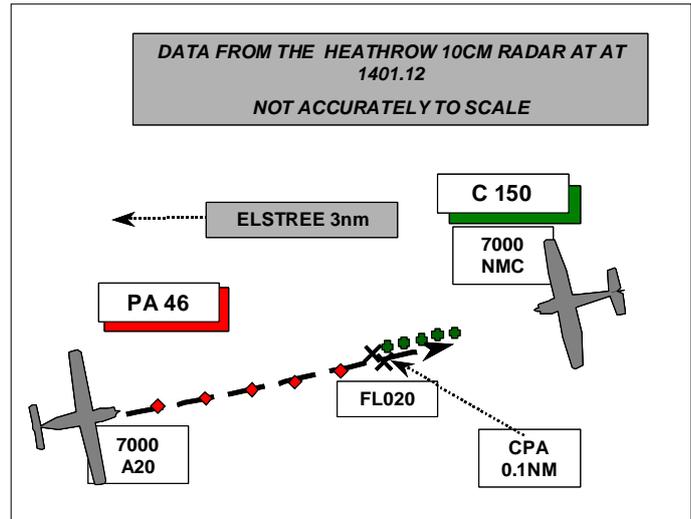
Visibility: 5nm NR

Reported Separation:

100-150ft V/100mH NK

Recorded Separation:

NR V/0.1nm H (See UKAB Note: (1))



PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

THE C150 PILOT reports flying a red white and blue ac with the tail HISL switched on, on a local private flight in communication with Elstree Information and squawking 7000, but Modes C and S were not fitted. He was heading 260° at 75kt, passing 4nm descending on the approach to RW26, having called at the Golf Course VRP, with patches of rain not affecting forward visibility to the N. He was concentrating on maintaining a stable approach when he became aware of a Piper Malibu, or similar type, flying straight and level on a reciprocal track slightly above and to the left of his track. Its landing light and white wingtip lights considerably aided his visual acquisition against the dark grey sky. He was perhaps too surprised to take avoiding action, though it was obvious that the ac would pass clear above and to the left, though as both ac maintained their respective courses, it would be very close.

He reported the reciprocal traffic to Elstree Information but initially heard no response from Elstree or the other pilot; later the FISO asked him for the height of encounter, which he estimated as being 1300ft QFE and at three miles (before the Tall Building VRP). The FISO informed him that he was in contact with a PA46, passing eastbound routing from Bournemouth to North Weald above the airfield cleared not below, 2000ft. Until entering the Elstree cct at Kings Langley, he had been squawking 5030 while in receipt of a BS from Farnborough North on the Regional QNH of 1017mb.

He assessed the risk as being Medium.

THE PA46 PILOT reports flying a new ac delivery flight from Bournemouth to North Weald under VFR in receipt of a BS from Elstree Squawking with Modes C and S.

He was not aware of any other ac in the Elstree area.

The FISO and ATSI did not comment

UKAB Note (1): The incident shows clearly on several radars. The Heathrow 10cm recording shows the PA46 squawking 7000 with Mode C and S approaching the incident area from the W tracking

about 085° at an Alt of 2000ft (QNH 1017mb). The C150 squawking 7000 with no Mode C data displayed is initially tracking about 140° before turning right onto S initially then further right onto the centreline for RW26 at 1400:50 tracking towards the PA46. The CPA is at 1401:11 with the C150 less than 0.1nm N of the PA46, which is still indicating 2000ft amsl (as it does throughout the period). If the C150 was at 1300ft QFE as the pilot reported this equates to 1630ft amsl indicating the calculated vertical separation was of the order of 370ft.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available included reports from the pilots of both ac and radar recordings.

The Board noted that both ac had been in receipt of a BS from Elstree at least for part of the incident period but, in the absence of a timed RT transcript, they assumed that neither pilot was aware of each other's presence from hearing one another's transmissions on the RT. Further, it appeared that despite being on opposing tracks, neither pilot had been given information by the FISO regarding one another; although he was not required to do so, one civil controller Member suggested that, in these circumstances it would have been good practice to do so.

The incident took place in an area of slightly reduced VMC conditions in Class G airspace where 'see and avoid' pertains. Despite the conditions the C150 pilot had first seen the PA46's lighting 600m away. Notwithstanding that he was surprised by its presence, he opted not to take any avoidance, indicating to Members that despite having time to react he considered that no risk of collision existed. The Board thought that the PA46 (solo) pilot had not seen the C150 possibly because it was obscured slightly below the nose of his ac.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: Non-sighting by the PA46 pilot and a late sighting by the C150 pilot.

Degree of Risk: C.