

AIRPROX REPORT No 2012132

Date/Time: 28 Aug 2012 1232Z

Position: 5115N 00103W (4nm
WNW Odiham - elev 405ft)

Airspace: MATZ (Class: G)

Reporting Ac Reported Ac

Type: Chinook Grob103
Glider

Operator: HQ JHC Civ Pte

Alt/FL: 2500ft 2300ft
QNH (1014hPa) QFE

Weather: VMC CLBC VMC CLBC

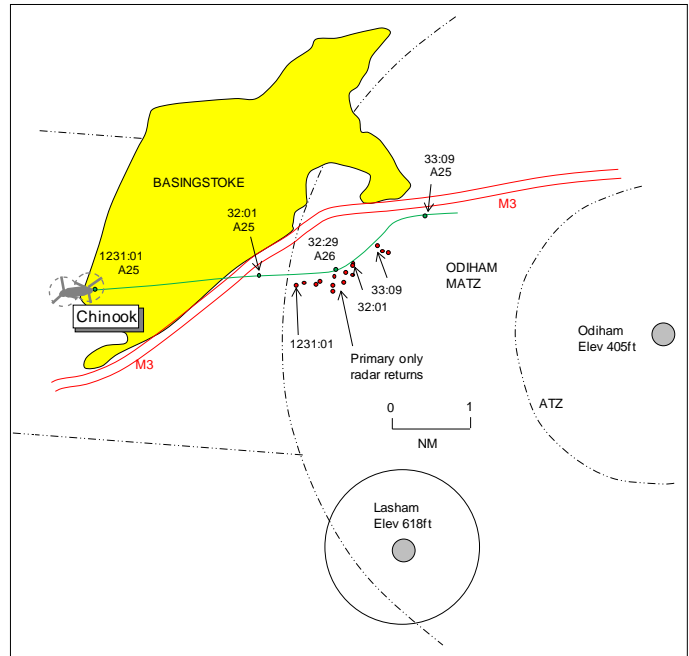
Visibility: >10km >10nm

Reported Separation:

250-300m H 100ft V/2nm H

Recorded Separation:

NR



PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

THE CHINOOK PILOT reports flying a dual advanced training sortie from Odiham, in receipt of a TS from Odiham Approach on 234.35MHz and squawking 3640 with Modes S and C. The visibility was >10km flying 500ft below cloud in VMC and the ac was coloured green with HISLs, nav and both landing lights all switched on. After completing IF GH, the helicopter was routing back towards Odiham for several instrument approaches by the PF in the RH seat under a visor. The transit was commenced at 2500ft QNH and the crew were informed by ATC that the unit was operating SSR only. Whilst 4nm W of Odiham heading 090° at 90kt and receiving vectors, a glider was seen slightly high in their 1 o'clock range 400m, and believed to be converging from the R. The QHI gave avoiding action and the helicopter was turned and descended away from the glider, estimating it passed 250-300m clear to their R. ATC were informed of the high-level of gliding activity and the sortie was continued without further problems. He assessed the risk as medium.

THE GROB103 PILOT reports flying a local sortie with a passenger from Lasham, VFR and in communication with Lasham on 131.25Mhz. The visibility was >10nm flying 800ft below cloud in VMC and the ac was coloured white. When over the M3 on the E side of Basingstoke at 2300ft QFE heading 180° towards Lasham at 50kt, he became aware of a Chinook in the vicinity, about 5nm away at about 2000ft. Their glider was obviously between the helicopter and Odiham on its track so he increased his speed by increasing his ROD. After a short while it was obvious that the Chinook was maintaining its course so, as a safety measure, he made a steeply banked quarter turn to the S to flash his wings before continuing. This obviously had the desired effect as the Chinook was seen to bank immediately sharply L before passing well to the N and slightly below. It was difficult to estimate the separation accurately (reported as 100ft vertically and 2nm horizontally) but the helicopter was noticeable but never large enough to be a threat. The P2 did not notice the Chinook until he explained why he had made the turn. He assessed the risk as low.

THE ODIHAM APPROACH CONTROLLER reports he identified the Chinook climbing out and applied a reduced TS with appropriate limitations operating SSR only. The Chinook carried out GH including operation below the base of radar cover and he applied BS as appropriate. When the flight called for recovery he identified the ac, applied a TS and limited the service as before. The Chinook crew asked for an SRA but were told that this was not available owing the Watchman Radar being

U/S so the crew asked for a PAR azimuth only. He telephoned the Tower controller and discussed using the SRA procedure minima and all other liaison calls as required. When the ac was about 4nm W of Odiham he passed a control instruction; however, the crew did not respond but he noticed the ac manoeuvre and decided not to say anything. The crew then told him that they were avoiding a glider and he informed the crew that he could not see anything on radar and to report ready for vectors. Post incident he spoke to the Chinook crew who understood the implications of ATC operating SSR only and they stated that it was a white glider against a white background.

BM SAFETY POLICY & ASSURANCE reports this Airprox occurred between a Chinook being vectored for an IFR recovery in receipt of a reduced TS, ATC operating SSR only, and a Grob103 glider operating VFR. The Watchman radar at Odiham was unserviceable at the time of the Airprox. Consequently, given the Grob103's lack of electronic conspicuity, APP was unable to provide TI to the Chinook pilot, breaching the ATM related safety barrier, leaving "see and avoid" as the sole remaining barrier.

UKAB Note (1): The Odiham METARs were: - EGVO 281150Z 22011KT 9999 SCT030 20/12 Q1014 BLU NOSIG= and EGVO 281250Z 20013KT 9999 BKN028 20/13 Q1014 BLU NOSIG=

UKAB Note (2): The radar recording does not capture the incident. At 1231:01 the Chinook is seen 7.5nm W Odiham tracking 085° at altitude 2500ft QNH with an intermittent slow-moving primary only return 2.5nm ahead tracking NE'ly. The primary only return then appears to manoeuvre about 3.75nm NNW of Lasham before fading at 1232:01, 1.25nm ahead of the Chinook. At 1332:29, as the Chinook passes close to the point where the primary response faded, the Chinook is seen to turn L about 40° onto a NE'ly track for approximately 30sec before turning R back towards Odiham. A primary only return reappears at 1233:09 in approximately the same area before it faded, about 0.75nm WSW of Chinook.

HQ JHC comments that this is prime example of the difficulties of operating in the vicinity of Odiham ATZ, at a very busy time, without a serviceable Primary Radar. It is recognised that the crew were flying under simulated IF conditions with one pilot being under an IF visor, which would have reduced the overall quality of the lookout. ATC were unable to provide TI on an unseen ac and collision avoidance was the pilot's responsibility. The Chinook pilot took avoiding action when he came into conflict with the glider and this Airprox is a firm reminder to aircrew to be extra vigilant when operating in Class G airspace without primary radar cover.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available included reports from the pilots of both ac, transcripts of the relevant RT frequencies, radar video recordings, reports from the air traffic controllers involved and reports from the appropriate ATC authorities.

Members noted that the movement of primary returns captured by recorded radar did not correlate to the Grob 103 pilot's reported track during the evolution of the incident. Also, Members were initially not entirely confident that the reported glider was the ac involved owing to the disparate separation distances reported. However, the geometry and 'timeline actions' were cohesive and did give the Board more confidence that the correct parties had been identified. Without the benefit of primary radar, Odiham ATC was unable to improve the Chinook pilot's SA on possible conflicting gliders operating within the MATZ. A gliding pilot Member remarked that the incident occurred in August when Lasham would be busy owing to the good soaring Wx conditions and that pilots should expect to see gliders operating below cloud thermalling. The MAA Advisor commented that there has been a good long-term relationship between Odiham and Lasham but he questioned the wisdom of civil ac flying inside the MATZ without radio. Another glider pilot Member noted that Lasham was inside the Odiham MATZ and opined that whilst encouraging GA pilots to call Odiham was sensible, it would be unworkable for glider flights, even if RT equipment was fitted, as the number of flights airborne on a normal day could easily exceed the workload capacity of the ATSU, which would be exacerbated

during competitions. Mass launches during competitions are notified via NOTAMs and thankfully Airprox incidents like these are a rare occurrence. The Mil Training pilot Member questioned whether, with Odiham ATC using SSR only, it had been a good idea for the Chinook crew to be carrying out simulated I/F with a pilot under a visor when it was a known good gliding day and where perhaps all pilots should have been 'eyes-out' looking for traffic. As it was, the Grob 103 pilot saw the Chinook, he estimated 5nm away, and attempted to move his ac out of the helicopter's flight path. When the Chinook continued to close, the pilot manoeuvred his glider to make it more conspicuous which apparently succeeded as the Chinook pilot saw it and executed an avoiding action L turn away and a descent. With the Chinook flight required to give way and a reported first sighting distance of 400m, and 300m separation at the CPA, Members considered if this had been a late-sighting; the Grob 103 pilot reported separation as 2nm at CPA. Owing to such a discrepancy in separation distances, which Members could not resolve, the Board elected to classify the incident as a conflict in the Odiham MATZ. With both pilots discharging their responsibilities to see and avoid within the Class G airspace of the MATZ, the Board concluded that any risk of collision had been effectively removed.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: A conflict in the Odiham MATZ.

Degree of Risk: C.