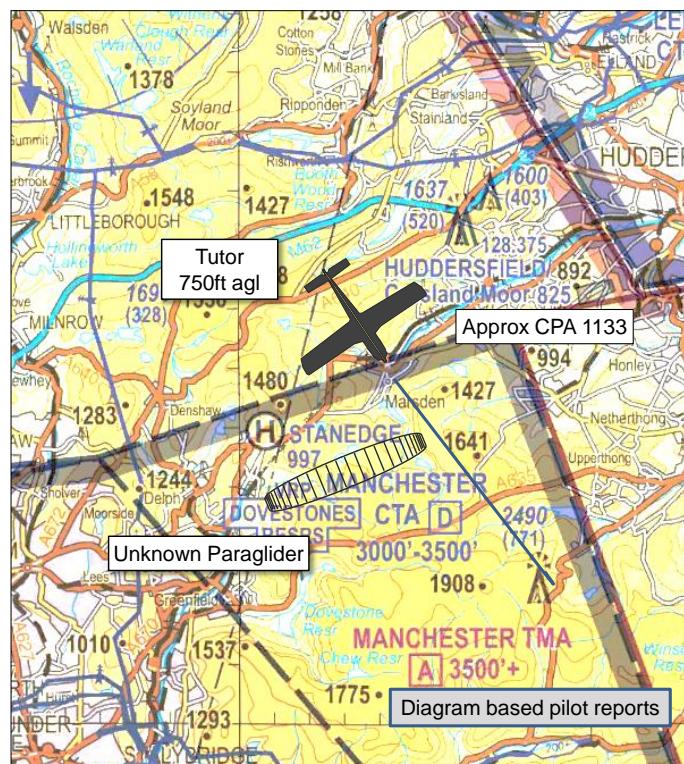


AIRPROX REPORT No 2014062Date/Time: 15 May 2014 1133ZPosition: 5335N 00155W
(Approx 6 nm SW Huddersfield)Airspace: Lon FIR (Class: G)
Aircraft 1 Aircraft 2Type: Tutor Untraced
ParagliderOperator: HQ Air (Trg) UnknownAlt/FL: 750ft NKConditions: VMC NKVisibility: >10K NKReported Separation:
100m V/<0.1nm H NKRecorded Separation:

NK

**PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB**

THE TUTOR PILOT reports flying a white aircraft with all lights illuminated and SSR transponder Modes 3A and C selected. Mid-way through a nav-ex the aircraft was being flown towards the Ladybower Reservoir in the Derwent Valley. Both the student and the instructor were looking out when the student in the right-hand-seat pitched the aircraft up because he had seen a paraglider pass beneath the aircraft from front to back underneath the right wing, approximately 100m below. He described it as a purple aerofoil with the pilot wearing a white helmet. The instructor in the LHS could see nothing and, despite both pilots looking behind, they couldn't identify the paraglider. The sortie continued without further incident.

He perceived the severity of the incident as 'Medium'.

THE UNTRACED AIRCRAFT: Unfortunately, the incident cannot be seen on the radar and it has not been possible to trace the paraglider.

Factual Background

The weather at Leeds Bradford was recorded as:

METAR EGNM 151120Z 29008KT 260V340 9999 FEW018 SCT040 16/12 Q1035

Analysis and Investigation**UKAB Secretariat**

Both aircraft shared an equal responsibility to avoid a collision¹, and the Tutor pilot was required to give way to the paraglider².

Comments

¹ Rules of the Air 2007 (as amended) Rule 8 (Avoiding Aerial Collisions)

² Ibid. Rule 9 (Converging)

HQ Air Command

On a day when the weather was good and with the navigation of the aircraft satisfied, both pilots turned their attention to lookout yet still did not see the paraglider until the last moment. This highlights just how difficult it is to see paragliders and similar sized air vehicles.

BHPA

Although there are paragliding sites along the track of the Tutor south of Marsden none were suitable for the wind at that time. Therefore the paraglider pilot had probably either flown there as part of a cross country flight or they were flying a paramotor. The aftercast shows conditions that would have made a soaring XC to this location at this time from any of the available sites virtually impossible. Therefore we believe that it was much more likely to have been a paramotor. As far as is known both the Tutor and the paramotor were being operated normally in Class G airspace and therefore both had a duty to actively partake in see and avoid. As the heading of the paramotor is not known it isn't possible to say who should have given way to whom. If the paramotor was other than in the process of taking off or landing then they were operating in a height band (i.e. below 1000ft agl) that the BHPA advises their powered pilots to keep out of as much as possible mid-week so as to limit encounters with military low flying.

Summary

An Airprox was reported on 15th May 2014 at approximately 1133, between a Tutor and what was reported as a paraglider but may have been a paramotor. Unfortunately, only the Tutor's track is visible on radar and the paraglider/paramotor could not be traced.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available included only the report from the Tutor pilot.

Noting the BHPA's comments, the Board was unable to positively determine whether this was a paraglider that had taken advantage of a micro-climate effect to soar in the area, or a paramotor that had transited to, or lifted from, the locale. Notwithstanding, the outcome did not hinge on positively identifying the specific type of air vehicle; as both the HQ Air Command and BHPA comments note, this Airprox highlights above all the need for good lookout by all in the see-and-avoid environment of Class G airspace.

The Board discussed whether the paraglider/paramotor pilot had seen the Tutor, and decided that because of the apparent lack of avoiding action, coupled with the fact that good airmanship would have dictated that he would have made a report had he done so, it would seem to indicate that he had not. In the event, it was probably the Tutor pilot's look-out and avoiding action that prevented this from being a more serious incident; there was no ATC service that the Tutor could have received in that area to assist him, and neither would a paraglider/paramotor have likely been detected on radar in that area anyway.

Both airspace users were entitled to operate in the area, and both were required to avoid colliding with each other. In determining the cause and risk, the Board decided the cause was a late sighting by the Tutor pilot and an assumed late sighting, at best, by the paraglider/paramotor pilot. After considering whether or not this should be a risk B assessment (safety margins much reduced below the norm), in the end the Board determined the risk to be C because they felt that effective and timely action had been taken by the Tutor pilot in achieving the reported 100m separation. Notwithstanding the achievement of collision avoidance, the Board noted that 100m was scant separation for a canopy-suspended air vehicle regarding potential turbulence.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: A late sighting by the Tutor pilot and an assumed late sighting by the paramotor/glider pilot.

Degree of Risk: C.

ERC Score³: 20.

³ Although the Event Risk Classification (ERC) trial had been formally terminated for future development at the time of the Board, for data continuity and consistency purposes, Director UKAB and the UKAB Secretariat provided a shadow assessment of ERC.