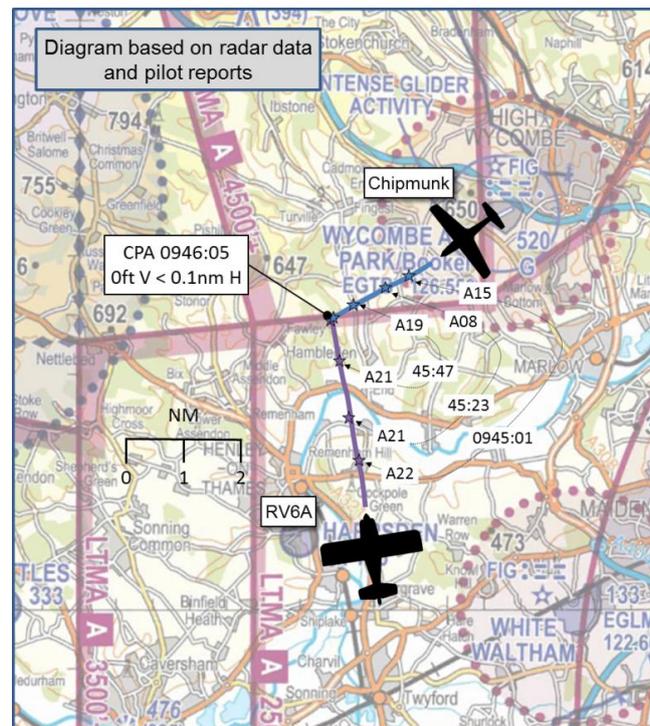


AIRPROX REPORT No 2014070**Date/Time:** 31 May 2014 0946Z (Saturday)**Position:** 5134N 00053W
(4nm SW of Wycombe Air Park)**Airspace:** London FIR (Class: G)**Aircraft 1** **Aircraft 2****Type:** Chipmunk DHC1 VANS RV6A**Operator:** Civ Pte Civ Pte**Alt/FL:** 2200ft 2200ft
(1026 hPa) NK hPa**Conditions:** VMC VMC**Visibility:** 10nm >10km**Reported Separation:**

<50ft V/30m H 'V Close' V & H

Recorded Separation: 0ft V/<0.1nm H**PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB**

THE CHIPMUNK DHC1 PILOT reports flying a silver aircraft under VFR in VMC, with navigation lights illuminated, squawking transponder Modes 3/A and C, climbing out of Wycombe Air Park; he was levelling at 2200ft and heading south-west at 90kt. He selected the frequency for Farnborough LARS¹ (West) and was waiting for a break between transmissions so that he could establish two-way contact and request a Basic Service. Suddenly, in his 11 o'clock, he saw a 'white Vans-type light-aircraft' which was heading north towards him at the same level. The Chipmunk pilot made an immediate 'max-rate' avoiding action turn to the left, and he believed that the other pilot must have seen him at about the same time because the conflicting aircraft also turned sharply to the left. Once he had 'recovered his composure' the Chipmunk pilot reported the Airprox to Farnborough LARS.

He assessed the risk of collision as 'High'.

THE RV6A PILOT reports flying a white aircraft under VFR in VMC, with a single strobe-light and the transponder turned on. He was cruising straight-and-level at '2200 to 2300ft', heading 010°, at 130kt, receiving a Basic Service from Farnborough LARS (West), when he looked to his right and saw a Chipmunk in his half-past-two position, around 50yds away, and heading directly towards him. The RV6A pilot took 'immediate avoiding action' by 'breaking hard-left and down'; he lost sight of the Chipmunk almost immediately but assessed that it would have passed 'very close behind' his aircraft.

He assessed the risk of collision as 'High'.

THE FARNBOROUGH LARS WEST CONTROLLER reports that the Chipmunk pilot reported the Airprox on the LARS (West) frequency at around 0950; the pilot reported flying at 2200ft (QNH 1026 hPa), on a heading of 220° the controller recalls, and had said that a 'white van' flying on a northerly heading had passed around 50-100ft away from his aircraft at the same altitude.

Factual Background

The weather at Wycombe Air Park at 0950 was recorded as:

METAR EGUB 310950Z 01004KT 9999 SCT030 BKN050 16/07 Q1025 BLU NOSIG

¹ Lower Airspace Radar Service

Analysis and Investigation

CAA ATSI

At 0944:06 the Chipmunk departed from Wycombe Air Park tracking southwest and squawking 7000. Meanwhile the RV6A was 6.5nm southwest of Wycombe at an altitude of 2100ft, tracking north, squawking 0431 and in receipt of a Basic Service from Farnborough LARS(West). The two aircraft were on converging tracks.

At 0945:58 the Farnborough controller was occupied transferring another aircraft (not involved in the Airprox) to Farnborough LARS(North). The Swanwick MRT recording showed that the horizontal distance between the RV6A and the Chipmunk at this time was 0.3nm, with the RV6A at 2100ft and the Chipmunk at 2000ft (Figure 1). The Airprox occurred between 0946:02 (Figure 2) and 0946:06 (Figure 3) whilst the controller was transmitting.

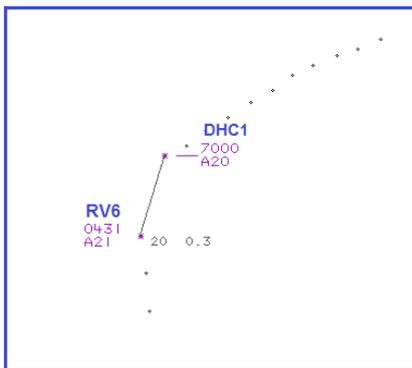


Figure 1 – 0945:58

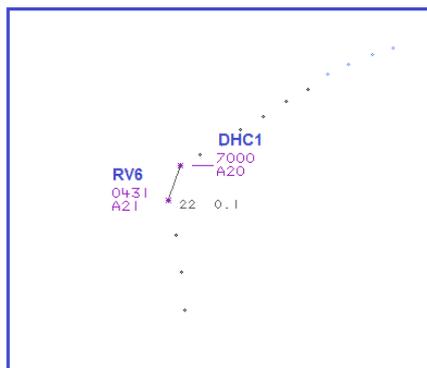


Figure 2 – 0946:02

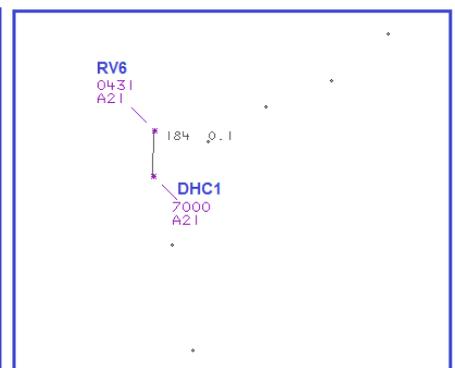


Figure 3 – 0946:06

At 0946:09 the two aircraft had passed and were diverging. The Farnborough controller instructed the RV6A pilot to contact Farnborough LARS(North) on frequency 132.8MHz. At 0947:50 the Chipmunk pilot contacted Farnborough LARS(West) reporting en-route from Wycombe to Henstridge via Old Sarum at 2000ft on QNH 1026hPa requesting a Basic Service [the distance between the two diverging aircraft was now 6.1nm]. The Chipmunk was instructed to squawk 0437 and a Basic Service agreed.

At 0949:30 the Chipmunk pilot advised that he wished to report an Airprox which had occurred 3 minutes earlier when the Chipmunk was at 2200ft on a heading of 220°. The controller acknowledged the report and asked for details of the other aircraft. The Chipmunk pilot reported that the other aircraft was a white Vans, heading in a northerly direction at the same altitude and estimated that the separation was 50 to 100ft. This was acknowledged by the controller and the Chipmunk was subsequently transferred en-route at 1001:02.

At the time of the Airprox, the Chipmunk was not in receipt of an ATS. The written report from the Chipmunk pilot indicated that he was waiting for gap in transmission on the Farnborough frequency when he sighted the Vans-type aircraft at the same level in his 11 o'clock position.

The RV6A was in receipt of a Basic Service where the pilot remains responsible for collision avoidance. The Farnborough controller was not required to monitor the RV6A and was not aware of the Chipmunk outbound from Wycombe. When the controller turned his attention to transferring the RV6A to the next agency, the Airprox had already occurred.

UKAB Secretariat

The aircraft were converging, and the Chipmunk was on the right of the RV6A, so the RV6A pilot was required to give way²

² Rules of the Air 2007, Rule 9, Converging

Summary

An Airprox was reported in Class G Airspace between an RV6A and a Chipmunk. The Chipmunk was just airborne from Wycombe Air Park and not yet in receipt of an Air Traffic Service; the RV6A was in receipt of a Basic Service from Farnborough LARS(West). Both pilots took avoiding action by turning hard left, and the RV6A pilot also descended. CPA was measured as 0ft V and <0.1nm H.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

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

Members noted that, whilst both pilots were on the same RT frequency with Farnborough LARS(West), they were not able to gain any information that would have helped them to detect this confliction earlier because the Chipmunk pilot was waiting for a break in transmissions before he could establish 2-way communication. Some members suggested that the RV6A pilot may have been better served if he had requested a Traffic Service from Farnborough LARS (West), but other members thought that, because the LARS controller was so busy, a request for an upgraded service would not have been accepted anyway. Members discussed this issue and agreed that the best approach is for pilots to request a Traffic Service if they consider it would be helpful, and to accept that the controller may have to refuse due to high workload. This way pilots could be assured of receiving the best possible service available at any time.

This encounter occurred in Class G airspace with both pilots seeing the other aircraft very late indeed; the Board quickly agreed that the cause was this late sighting by both pilots. Although both pilots had taken appropriate avoiding action, CPA was measured³ on radar as 0ft V and <0.1nm H (which is commensurate with both pilots' reports). As a result of the closeness of the encounter, there was debate amongst the Board members as to whether the Degree of Risk had been A (chance had played a major part and nothing more could have been done) or B (the avoiding action had had a positive material effect). In the end, the Board agreed that although they had been conducted at a late stage, the avoiding actions of both pilots had positively increased the separation to the extent that the aircraft missed each other, and so they decided that the Degree of Risk was B.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: A late sighting by both pilots.

Degree of Risk: B.

ERC Score⁴: 20.

³ Mode C has a tolerance of +/- 200ft whilst the lowest accurate measurement available from the radar recording is 0.1nm.

⁴ 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.