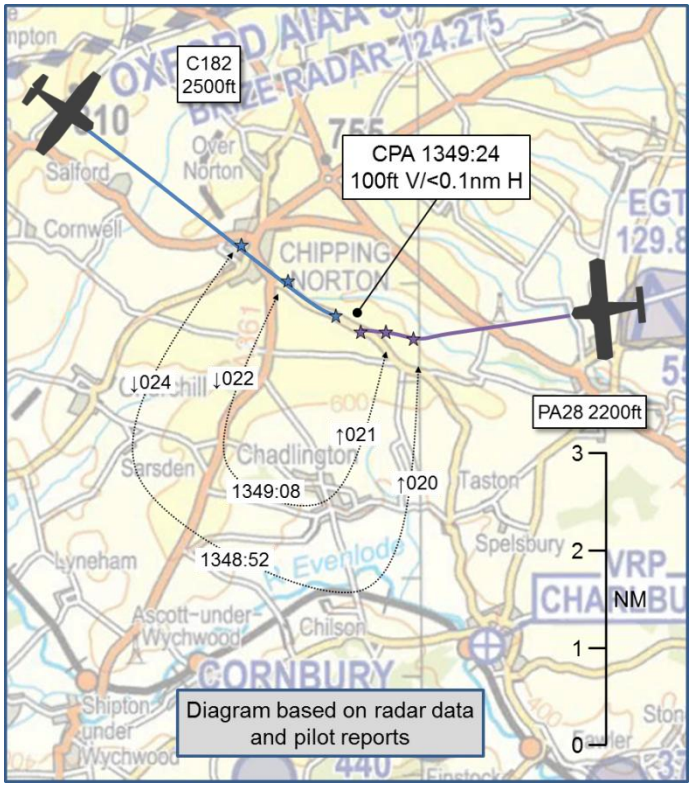
AIRPROX REPORT No 2015094

Date: 24 Jun 2015 Time: 13:49Z Position: 5155N 00130W Location: Chipping Norton

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	C182	PA28
Operator	Civ Trg	Civ Pte
Airspace	Oxford AIAA	Oxford AIAA
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	Basic	None
Provider	Oxford	Enstone
Altitude/FL	2300ft	2200ft
Transponder	A,C	A,C,S
Reported		
Colours	White/Red	White/Red
Lighting	Beacon/Strobes	
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	>10km	>10km
Altitude/FL	2500ft	2200ft
Altimeter	QNH (1020hPa)	NK
Heading	125°	North-west
Speed	125kt	
ACAS/TAS	Not fitted	NK
Separation		
Reported	150ft V/50m H	NK
Recorded	100ft V/0.1nm H	



THE C182 PILOT reports that he was on an instructional land-away sortie. On the return leg they were descending from 3000ft to 2300ft for a PFL at Oxford. In the vicinity of Chipping Norton, they saw a PA28, white and red-brown in colour, pass left to right approximately 150-200ft below, climbing, possibly from Enstone. They turned left for avoidance and it appeared that the other aircraft continued on track and in the climb.

He assessed the risk of collision as 'High'.

THE PA28 PILOT reports conducting a trial lesson flight with 3 POB. They took off from Enstone and climbed to 2200ft in good VMC. They changed frequency from Enstone to Brize radar for a Basic Service, and control of the aircraft was handed to the student overhead Chipping Norton. At no point were they visual with another aircraft in close proximity.

OXFORD ATC report that the incident was not notified on RT at the time and the Unit was not notified until 3 weeks later, by which time the controller had no recollection of the events. It was noted that for traffic under a Basic Service hazard advice would be passed when workload permitted; Oxford Radar is a single manned control position in an AIAA and is often subject to high workload.

THE BRIZE RADAR CONTROLLER reports that he was notified of the incident after the event and has no recollection anything unusual happening.

Factual Background

The weather at Brize Norton was recorded as:

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METAR EGVN 241350Z 25008KT CAVOK 22/06 Q1019 BLU NOSIG
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Analysis and Investigation

CAA ATSI

The C182 was on a training flight and returning to Oxford. The PA28 was on a local training flight from Enstone. The C182 had called Oxford Radar at 1346:20 and a Basic Service was agreed. The C182 was assigned the code 4520.

The radar recording showed the PA28 leave the Enstone area and track westbound. CPA occurred at 1349:27 (Figure 1). The PA28 did not call Oxford but reported calling Brize Radar. No Traffic Information was provided by the Oxford controller about the PA28 although the controller did provide generic Traffic Information about other traffic. Under a Basic Service the controller is not obliged to monitor a flight, and the responsibility for collision avoidance remains with the pilot.

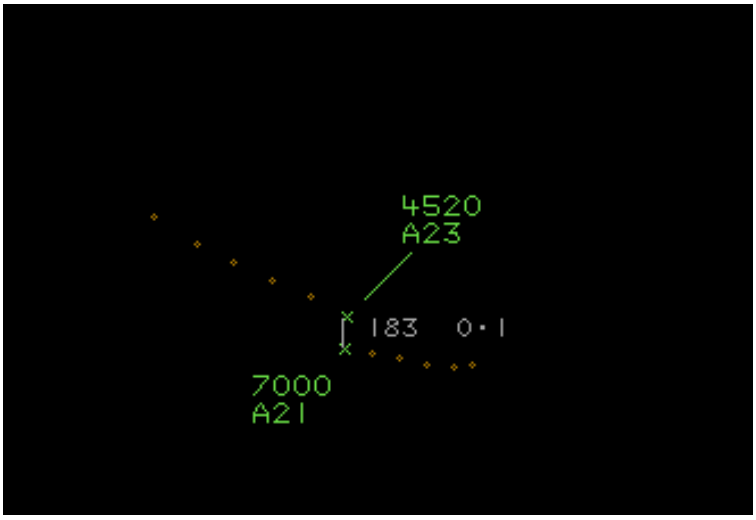

Figure 1 Swanwick MRT 1349:27 – CPA

Military ATM

The Brize controller was not made aware of the incident on frequency and the Airprox was reported to Brize sometime after the incident. The controller could not recall any conversation with Oxford ATC or the aircraft in question. CPA was estimated at 1349:24 with 100ft height separation and 0.1nm horizontal separation. The PA28 freecalled Brize LARS at 1351:57 and was placed under a Basic Service at 1352:23. The PA28 pilot report suggested that the crew were on climbout from Enstone at the reported Airprox time. From the tape transcript and radar replay, it would appear that the PA28 was not on the Brize frequency at CPA.

UKAB Secretariat

Both pilots shared an equal responsibility for collision avoidance and not to operate in such proximity to other aircraft as to create a collision hazard[1]. If the incident geometry is considered as head-on, or nearly so, then both pilots were required to turn to the right[2].

Summary

An Airprox was reported on 24th June 2015 between a C182 and a PA28. Both aircraft were flying VFR in VMC. The PA28 was receiving an a/g service from Enstone and the C182 was under a Basic Service from Oxford. The C182 pilot saw the PA28 and took avoiding action, but the PA28 did not see the C182.

[1] SERA.3205 Proximity.
[2] SERA.3210 Right-of-way (c) (1) Approaching head-on.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of 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.

The Board noted that both pilots were flying sorties that were likely to include a lot of instructing within the cockpit which may well have diverted their attention away from their lookout. The C182 pilot was receiving a Basic Service from Oxford, but the controller was not required to monitor the flight, or give Traffic Information, and responsibility for separation rested solely with the pilot, ultimately this was see-and-avoid in Class G airspace. The Board noted that, in relation to the C182, the PA28 was climbing up from a likely dark background and was probably difficult to see against the backdrop of the ground; members opined that this in itself might account for the late sighting. In the event, the Board noted that the C182 pilot did see the PA28, albeit late, and took avoiding action.

As for the PA28, the Board noted that it was climbing out of Enstone and had not yet called Brize for a Basic Service; again, responsibility for separation lay with the PA28 instructor in see-and-avoid airspace. The Board thought it likely that the Airprox happened at the point at which he was handing over the controls to the student pilot, during a trial lesson, which again probably resulted in reduced look-out as the instructor monitored the very inexperienced student's performance after transfer of control. The Board noted that the instructor did not see the C182 at all.

In determining the cause, the Board quickly agreed that this was a late sighting by the C182 pilot and a non-sighting by the PA28 pilot. Turning to the risk, the Board debated whether the C182 pilot's avoiding action had been at CPA (and therefore made no material difference to the separation), or had been before CPA (and therefore could be considered to have increased the separation). In the end, they decided that the C182 pilot's description of events indicated that he had seen and reacted to the PA28 before CPA and that the avoiding action probably had made a difference. As a result, they assessed the risk as Category B, avoiding action had been taken but safety margins had been much reduced below the norm.

The Board wished to highlight that because this Airprox was not reported on frequency at the time, neither controller had any recollection of the events. Had the Airprox been reported on the frequency, the controllers would have been alerted to the traffic situation and may have been able to give more in the way of background information.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: A late sighting by the C182 pilot and a non-sighting by the PA28 pilot.

Degree of Risk: B.