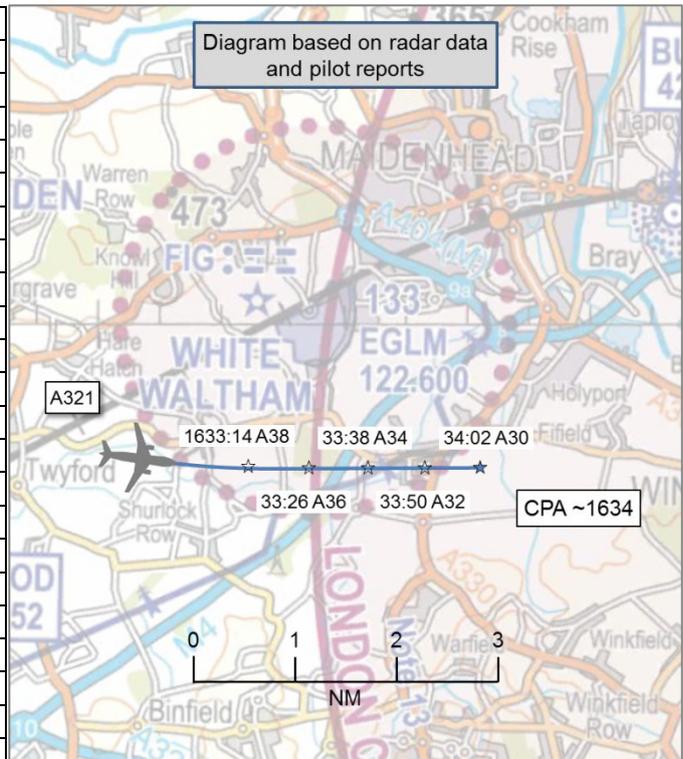


AIRPROX REPORT No 2015198

Date: 12 Aug 2015 Time: 1634Z Position: 5128N 00043W Location: 10nm W Heathrow

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	A321	Unidentified
Operator	CAT	Unknown
Airspace	London CTR	London CTR
Class	D	D
Rules	IFR	
Service	Radar Control	
Provider	Heathrow	
Altitude/FL	3000ft	
Transponder	A, C, S	
Reported		Not reported
Colours	Red, white, blue	
Lighting	'All on'	
Conditions	VMC	
Visibility	NK	
Altitude/FL	3000ft	
Altimeter	NK (NK hPa)	
Heading	090°	
Speed	180kt	
ACAS/TAS	TCAS II	
Alert	None	
Separation		
Reported	'Just under'	
Recorded		NK



THE A321 PILOT reports being at 3000ft on the ILS to RW09L at Heathrow when an object, the size of a drone, passed just under the aircraft. The PF did not look at the object directly but perceived that it was round and coloured white with orange lines.

THE HEATHROW CONTROLLER: Due to the delay in filing the Airprox report, it was not possible to obtain a report from the controller.

Factual Background

The weather at Heathrow was recorded as follows:

METAR EGLL 121620Z 08010KT 9999 SCT046 22/13 Q1022 NOSIG=
 METAR EGLL 121650Z 07010KT 9999 SCT044 21/13 Q1022 NOSIG=

Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

The Air Navigation Order 2009 (as amended), Article 138¹ states:

'A person must not recklessly or negligently cause or permit an aircraft to endanger any person or property.'

Article 166, paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 state:

¹ Article 253 of the ANO details which Articles apply to small unmanned aircraft. Article 255 defines 'small unmanned aircraft'. The ANO is available to view at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk>.

'(2) The person in charge of a small unmanned aircraft may only fly the aircraft if reasonably satisfied that the flight can safely be made.

(3) The person in charge of a small unmanned aircraft must maintain direct, unaided visual contact with the aircraft sufficient to monitor its flight path in relation to other aircraft, persons, vehicles, vessels and structures for the purpose of avoiding collisions.'

(4) The person in charge of a small unmanned aircraft which has a mass of more than 7kg excluding its fuel but including any articles or equipment installed in or attached to the aircraft at the commencement of its flight, must not fly the aircraft

(a) in Class A, C, D or E airspace unless the permission of the appropriate air traffic control unit has been obtained;

(b) within an aerodrome traffic zone ...; or

(c) at a height of more than 400 feet above the surface unless it is flying in airspace described in sub-paragraph (a) or (b) and in accordance with the requirements for that airspace.'

A CAA web site² provides information and guidance associated with the operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UASs) and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs).

Additionally, the CAA has published a UAV Safety Notice³ which states the responsibilities for flying unmanned aircraft. This includes:

'You are responsible for avoiding collisions with other people or objects - including aircraft.

Do not fly your unmanned aircraft in any way that could endanger people or property.

It is illegal to fly your unmanned aircraft over a congested area (streets, towns and cities).

..., stay well clear of airports and airfields'.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when an A321 and an unknown object flew into proximity at about 1634 on Wednesday 12th August 2015. The A321 pilots was operating under IFR in VMC, in receipt of a Radar Control Service from Heathrow Approach.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of a report from the A321 pilot and radar photographs/video recordings (which did not show a track for the unidentified object).

The Board was faced with a paucity of information regarding this Airprox. The report was not filed until some 13 weeks after the date of occurrence, by which time any prospect of a controller report had been lost. This may have provided information gleaned from pilots ahead of or behind the Airprox A321, but without the report it was not possible to be certain. The unknown object could be described as a drone, or it may have been a coloured balloon; members agreed that although the proximity of the object had caused the A321 pilot concern, it simply was not possible to reach a measured conclusion as to its likely identity. It was clear from his description that the A321 pilot had perceived that the object passed in close proximity, and that there had not been time to take avoiding action. However, members agreed that, notwithstanding the A321 pilot's perception, it was not possible to conclude categorically the degree of confliction.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: Insufficient information to establish a cause.

Degree of Risk: D.

² www.caa.co.uk/uas

³ CAP 1202