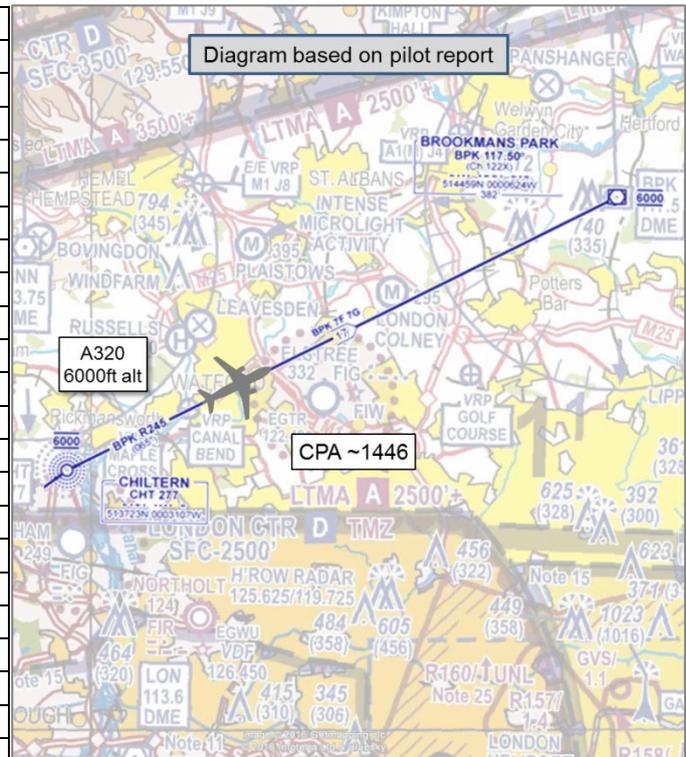


AIRPROX REPORT No 2016022

Date: 23 Feb 2016 Time: 1446Z Position: 5140N 00024W Location: London TMA

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	A320	Drone
Operator	CAT	Unknown
Airspace	London TMA	London TMA
Class	A	A
Rules	IFR	
Service	Radar Control	
Provider	Swanwick	
Altitude/FL	6000ft	
Transponder	A, C, S	
Reported		Not reported
Colours	Blue/white	
Lighting	Strobes, nav	
Conditions	VMC	
Visibility	NK	
Altitude/FL	6000ft	
Altimeter	QNH (NK hPa)	
Heading	065°	
Speed	220kt	
ACAS/TAS	TCAS II	
Alert	None	
Separation		
Reported	200ft V/0m H	
Recorded		NK



THE A320 PILOT reports departing London Heathrow on a BPK 7G SID. Whilst in level flight at 6000ft, approximately 5nm northeast of the CHT NDB, a white, diamond-shaped drone was observed, which passed about 200ft above and slightly to the right (over the right-hand engine). The crew caught sight of the drone at a very late stage but, with a low workload, had time to assess that it would pass above so they maintained straight-and-level flight. The drone went past the aircraft within 2 to 3 seconds.

He assessed the risk of collision as 'High'.

THE DRONE OPERATOR: A drone operator could not be traced.

Factual Background

The weather at Heathrow was recorded as follows:

METAR COR EGLL 231450Z AUTO 33006KT 290V020 9999 NCD 09/00 Q1018 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.'

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>.

Article 166, paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 state:

'(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 A320 and a drone flew into proximity at about 1446 on Tuesday 23rd February 2016. The A320 pilot was operating under IFR in VMC, in receipt of a Radar Control Service from Swanwick.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of a report from the A320 pilot and radar photographs/video recordings, which did not show a track for the drone.

The Board agreed that the drone was being operated at an altitude and location that contravened regulations and hence had been flown into conflict with the A320, which was departing Heathrow on a SID in the Class A airspace of the London TMA. The Board noted that the A320 crew had had time to assess that the drone would pass above; notwithstanding, they felt that the proximity was such that safety had been much reduced.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: The drone was flown into conflict with the A320.

Degree of Risk: B.

² www.caa.co.uk/uas

³ CAP 1202