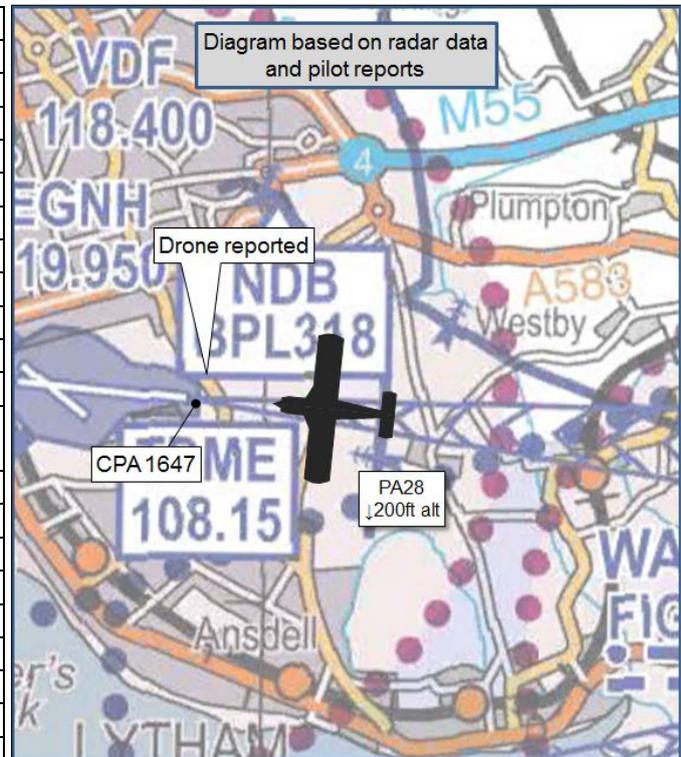


AIRPROX REPORT No 2016077

Date: 15 May 2016 Time: 1647Z Position: 5346N 00301W Location: Blackpool

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

| Recorded | Aircraft 1 | Aircraft 2 |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Aircraft | PA28 | Drone |
| Operator | Civ Club | Unknown |
| Airspace | Blackpool ATZ | Blackpool ATZ |
| Class | G | G |
| Rules | VFR | |
| Service | Aerodrome | |
| Provider | Blackpool TWR | |
| Altitude/FL | NK | |
| Transponder | Not fitted | |
| Reported | | Not reported |
| Colours | White | |
| Lighting | Strobes, beacon, nav, nose, wing | |
| Conditions | VMC | |
| Visibility | >10km | |
| Altitude/FL | 200ft | |
| Altimeter | QFE (1021hPa) | |
| Heading | 280° | |
| Speed | 65kt | |
| ACAS/TAS | Not fitted | |
| Separation | | |
| Reported | 0ft V/200m H | |
| Recorded | | NK |



THE PA28 PILOT reports descending on final approach to land on RW28 when the right, rear-seat occupant pointed out a blue quadcopter drone. The drone was operating at the airfield boundary and displaced approximately 200m north from the RW28 threshold as they descended through its level. The drone was seen to have red and green lights, and to be manoeuvring in all 3 axis. Blackpool ATC was informed after they landed.

He assessed the risk of collision as 'Low'.

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

Factual Background

The weather at Blackpool was recorded as follows:

METAR EGNH 151650Z 29010KT 9999 FEW025 12/06 Q1022=

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.'

In addition, the CAA has published regulation regarding First Person View (FPV) drone operations which limit this activity to drones of less than 3.5kg take-off mass, and to not more than 1000ft².

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a PA28 and a drone flew into proximity at about 1647 on Sunday 15th May 2016. The PA28 pilot was operating under VFR in VMC in receipt of an Aerodrome Control Service from Blackpool. The drone operator could not be traced.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of a report from the PA28 pilot.

The PA28 pilot reported seeing the drone at whilst on final approach to land on RW28 at Blackpool Airport. The Board first noted that, as for other aviators, drone operators are fundamentally required to avoid collisions with all other aircraft. More specifically, drone flight within an ATZ is prohibited in without the permission of the appropriate air traffic control unit, in this case Blackpool ATC, who confirmed that no such permission had been given. On the basis that the drone operator should not operate his drone in a location that would 'recklessly or negligently cause or permit an aircraft to endanger any person or property', the Board determined that the cause of the incident had been that the drone had been flown into proximity with the PA28. Although the incident did not show on the NATS radars, the pilot reported that the drone was approximately 200m displaced horizontally and members agreed that the drone was at a range that did not present an imminent risk of collision, but that it was an unnecessary distraction at a critical stage of flight for the PA28 pilot; they therefore assessed the risk as Category C.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: The drone was flown into proximity to the PA28.

Degree of Risk: C.

² ORS4 No. 1168 Small Unmanned Aircraft – First Person View (FPV) Flying available at: [ORS4 No 1168](#).