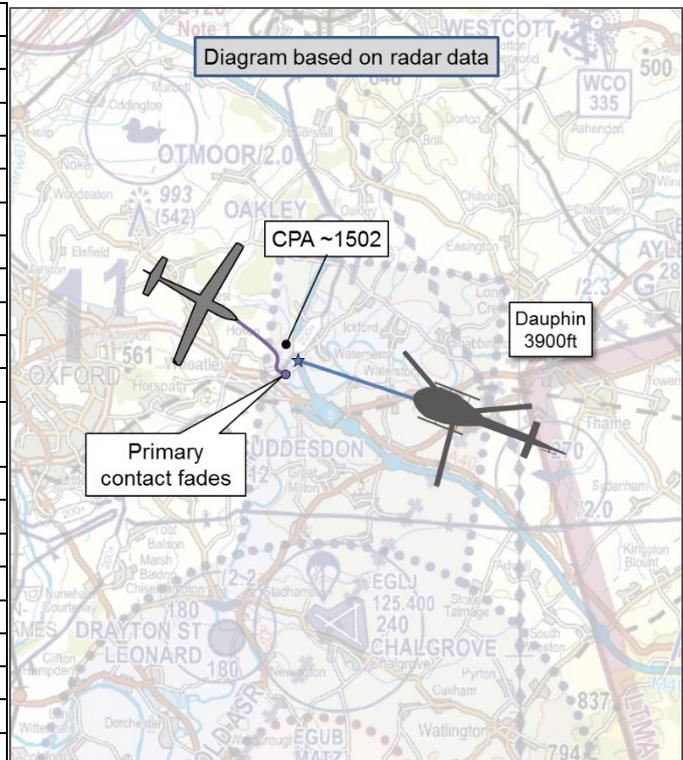


AIRPROX REPORT No 2018136

Date: 21 Jun 2018 Time: 1502Z Position: 5146N 00116W Location: 6nm N Benson

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	Dauphin	Unknown Glider
Operator	HQ JHC	
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	
Service	Basic	
Provider	Benson	
Altitude/FL	3900ft	
Transponder	A, C	
Reported		
Colours	Blue, White	
Lighting	Anti Cols, Position Lights	
Conditions	VMC	
Visibility	>10kms	
Altitude/FL	4000ft	
Altimeter	NK	
Heading	NK	
Speed	NK	
ACAS/TAS	TAS	
Alert	None	
Separation		
Reported	100ft V/150m H	
Recorded		NK



THE DAUPHIN PILOT reports that he was routing between Benson’s northern stub and Brize Norton’s airspace at 4000ft and receiving a Basic Service from Benson Zone. They were informed about traffic 10 o’clock, 0.5nm with no height information. An aircraft was displayed on the TAS, but this was indicating in the 1 o’clock and 2nm away. Both pilot and crewman called visual with a fixed wing aircraft in the 1 o’clock. The crewman then saw a glider pass through the 9 o’clock, to go behind by about 100ft and 150m; the glider did not appear on TAS and there were no glider sites in the vicinity, or NOTAMs to suggest glider activity.

He assessed the risk of collision as ‘Medium’.

The Glider pilot could not be traced.

THE BENSON ZONE CONTROLLER reports that the Airprox was brought to his attention 5 days after the event. Although he couldn’t remember much detail, he knew that at the time he was an OJTI with a trainee and that they controlled a number of MATZ crossers. During the course of the afternoon there had been a large stream of gliders routing north to south in close proximity to the western edge of the Benson MATZ. Traffic Information was passed to various pilots on frequency, and this had been supplemented by information taken from FLARM.

He perceived the severity of the incident as ‘Medium’.

Factual Background

The weather at Benson was recorded as follows:

METAR EGUB 211450Z 34009KT CAVOK 19/02 Q1027 BLU NOSIG=

A NOTAM regarding a glider competition at Dunstable Downs is reproduced below:

H3779/18
Q) EGTG/QWGLW/IV/M/AW/000/100/5152N00033W010
A) EGGW
 GLIDING. MAJOR GLIDING COMPETITION. INTENSE ACT WI 10NM RADIUS
 515200N 0003254W (DUNSTABLE DOWNS, CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE). UP TO 50
 GLIDERS AND 8 TUG ACFT MAY PARTICIPATE. FOR DAILY ROUTE INFO
WWW.GLIDINGTASKS.CO.UK OR 07812928215 AND 119.900MHZ OR 130.100MHZ
 2018-06-0280/AS3
LOWER: SFC
UPPER: FL100
FROM: 19 JUN 2018 09:12 **TO:** 22 JUN 2018 19:00
SCHEDULE: 0800-1900

Analysis and Investigation

Military ATM

This Airprox was not reported on frequency and the controller involved was not made aware of its occurrence until 5 days later. Therefore, neither the controller involved nor the supervisor had any recollection of the event. This situation was made even more confusing as the incident was initially reported to have occurred at 1400 not 1500 and therefore the investigation conducted by the unit was focussed on the outbound transit of the Dauphin not the inbound leg. As a result, no radar replay was available to this HQ for analysis. Irrespective of this, the aircraft was receiving a Basic Service and was passed Traffic Information on two occasions at 1502:09 and 1502:24. CAP 774 states:

Given that the provider of a Basic Service is not required to monitor the flight, pilots should not expect any form of traffic information from a controller/FISO.

And:

A controller with access to surveillance-derived information shall avoid the routine provision of traffic information on specific aircraft but may use that information to provide a more detailed warning to the pilot.

But:

If a controller/ FISO considers that a definite risk of collision exists, a warning shall be issued to the pilot

Given that the controller was monitoring this flight and passed Traffic Information on two occasions, they discharged their duties correctly in this instance.

UKAB Secretariat

The following screen shots were taken using NATS radars, not the radar available to the Benson controller, so not necessarily indicative of what he could see. The Benson controller gave Traffic Information at 1502:09 (Figure 1). Further traffic can be seen in the 1 o'clock, 1.5nm away, which may have been the fixed wing traffic indicting on the Dauphin's TAS. At 1502:24 the Benson controller passed Traffic Information on the fixed wing aircraft. Two primary-only contacts can be seen 1.2nm and 1.7nm to the north-west of the Dauphin. By 1502:47 the closest primary contact had faded from radar, 0.3nm to the south of the Dauphin.

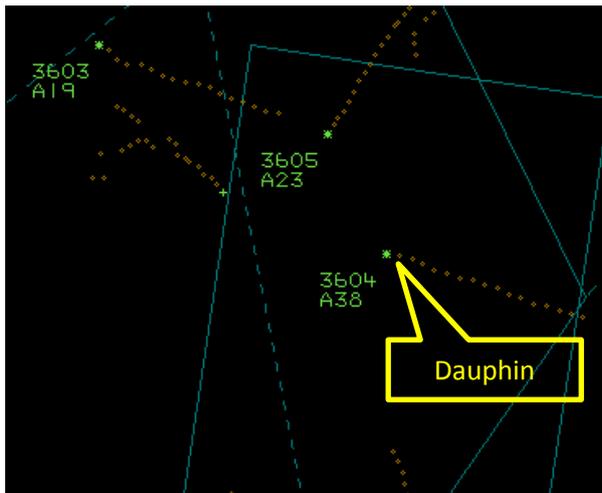


Figure 1: 1502:09
(Dauphin squawking 3604)

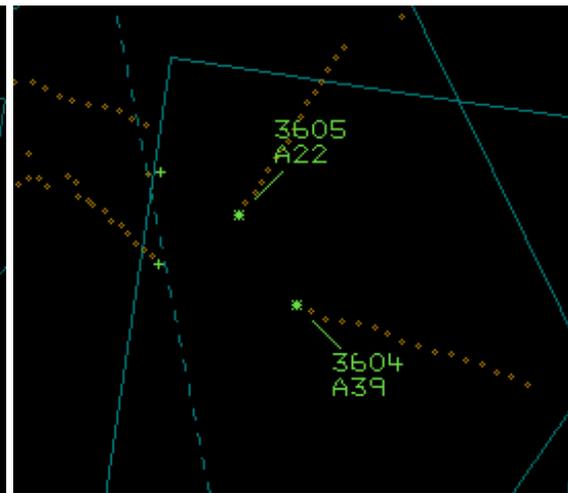


Figure 2 1502:24

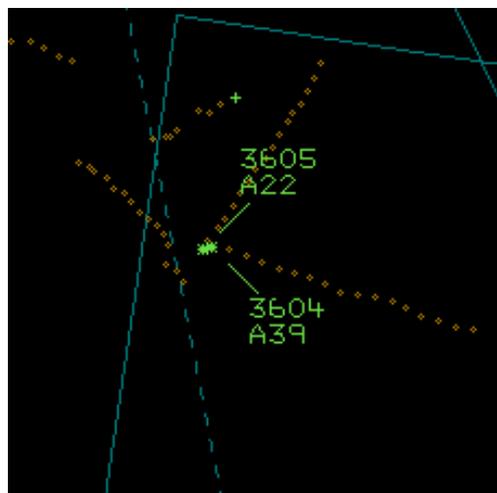


Figure 3 1502:47

The Dauphin and glider pilots shared an equal responsibility for collision avoidance and not to operate in such proximity to other aircraft as to create a collision hazard¹. If the incident geometry is considered as converging then the Dauphin pilot was required to give way to the glider².

Comments

JHC

This Airprox has highlighted a number of issues with regard to Airprox Investigation and JHC wishes to thank the secretariat for its patience and letting the unit attempt to conduct a thorough investigation of the incident. The initial DASOR comments from the Pilot reference no glider sites in the vicinity and a lack of NOTAMs, by their own admission, could have been chosen more carefully. Other indications of gliding activity in the area may have been available as the phrase 'possible gliders' was used on the in-use ATS frequency in a Traffic Information call to another callsign. Whilst under a Basic Service and having been given Traffic Information by ATC, it is worth noting that the 'cone of uncertainty' of the TAS system still needs to be considered and the pilot made every effort to maintain a thorough lookout. Whether prior knowledge of the NOTAM for the gliding competition played a part is unknown as we cannot tell if the glider in question was part of

¹ SERA.3205 Proximity.

² SERA.3210 Right-of-way (c)(2) Converging.

that event. It is also unfortunate the Glider pilot could not be traced as it is unknown if he had attempted to raise comms with Benson which could have added to the overall air traffic picture.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a Dauphin and a glider flew into proximity at 1502hrs on Thursday 21st June 2018. The Dauphin pilot was operating under VFR in VMC, and in receipt of a Basic Service from Benson Zone. The glider pilot could not be traced.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of a report from the Dauphin pilot, transcripts of the relevant R/T frequencies, radar photographs/video recordings, reports from the air traffic controllers involved and reports from the appropriate ATC and operating authorities.

The Board first looked at the actions of the Dauphin pilot. He was transiting through Benson's airspace and had called for a Basic Service. Although the Board would normally advise pilots to request a Traffic Service if they required Traffic Information, in fact in this case the Benson controller gave very good Traffic Information and the pilot would have been unlikely to get anything more from a Traffic Service. Nevertheless, the Board thought it worth highlighting that under a Basic Service controllers are not required to monitor the flight on the radar and not obliged to pass Traffic Information. Having been given Traffic Information on two contacts with no height information, likely to be gliders, the controller then passed information on an aircraft that was also under his control and well below. This was the aircraft displaying on the Dauphin's TAS and the Board wondered if the crew then become fixated on this aircraft to the detriment of looking for the previously called traffic. Certainly, the glider was only seen by the crewman when it was in the 9 o'clock position and passing behind in close proximity. The Board also noted that there were a lot of gliders in the area, including a gliding competition from Dunstable and thought that it was unfortunate that the Dauphin crew had not assimilated that the competition would be in the area that they were transiting through, despite a NOTAM. Given the Dauphin pilot's assertion in his report that there were no glider NOTAMs valid in the area when in fact there was, some members questioned whether his unit's flight planning processes were robust. The Board noted that the Airprox had not been reported on the frequency at the time, and consequently the controller was not made aware of it until some days later, with further confusion about the timing of the incident. Members wished to remind pilots of the necessity to report Airprox on the RT if at all possible, or at the very least soon after landing, so that those who might be involved could save valuable information relating to the incident.

Unfortunately, due to the confusion over the time of the Airprox the glider pilot could not be traced and so his perspective on the incident was not available. However, the Board thought that it was likely that the glider pilot had seen the Dauphin and was manoeuvring to avoid it, because the radar track showed a turn that routed behind the helicopter. Gliding members also noted that it was often the case that a helicopter would be heard approaching from some distance, so they opined that it was likely that the glider pilot was aware of the Dauphin. Some members wondered whether the glider pilot could have called Benson ATC. The Board agreed that this would have been of value, but it was also noted that he was operating at 4000ft and therefore well above the Benson MATZ.

Turning to the Benson controller, the Board commended him for calling the traffic despite the Dauphin only being on a Basic Service. They were also heartened to hear that that Benson ATC were using their FLARM receiver to gain additional situational awareness on glider activity (albeit acknowledging that such information could not be used to provide accurate information on individual tracks). Whilst the FLARM display did provide useful generic information, there were latency issues with this that meant that it was only because the glider was indicating on radar that the controller was able to provide specific Traffic Information about the glider.

The Board then debated the cause of the Airprox and quickly agreed that it had been a late sighting by the Dauphin pilot. That the pilot didn't see the glider and wasn't able to take avoiding action led the Board to assess the risk as Category B, safety had not been assured.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: A non-sighting by the Dauphin pilot.

Degree of Risk: B.

Safety Barrier Assessment³

In assessing the effectiveness of the safety barriers associated with this incident, the Board concluded that the key factors had been that:

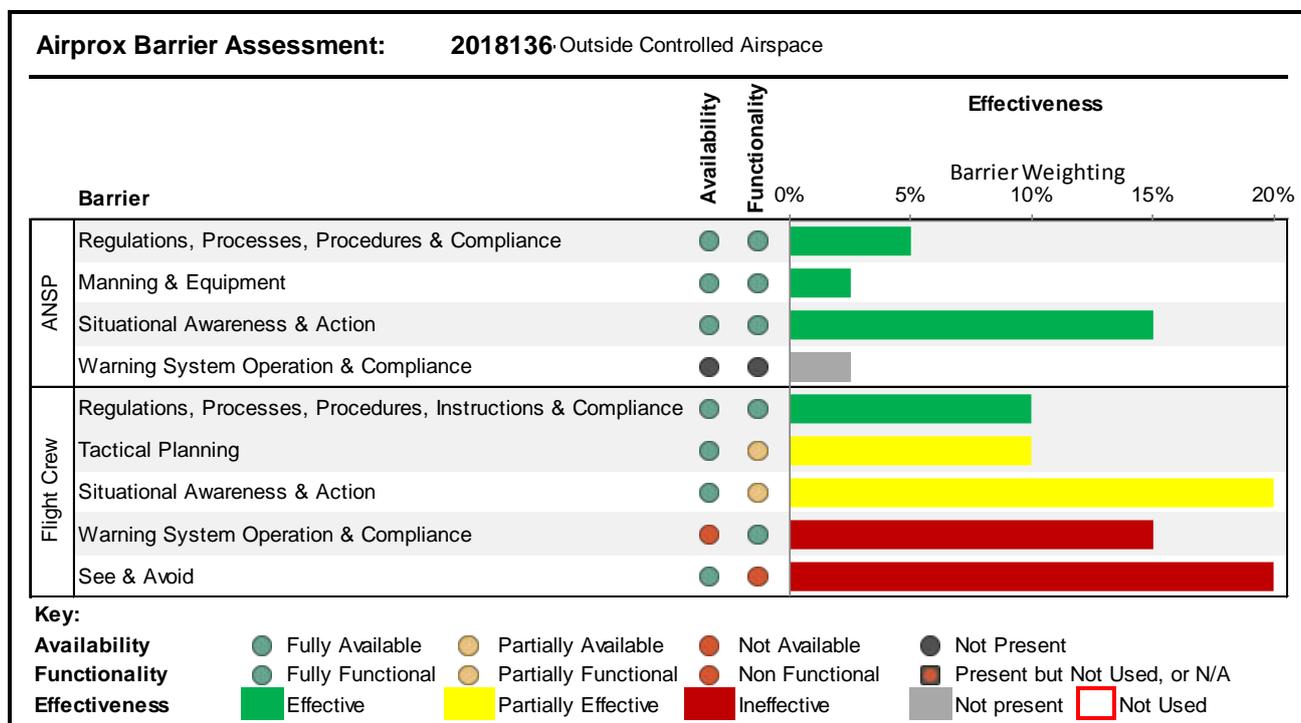
Flight Crew:

Tactical Planning was assessed as **partially effective** because the Dauphin pilot was not aware of the gliding competition NOTAM.

Situational Awareness and Action were assessed as **partially effective** because although the Dauphin pilot was given Traffic Information by the controller, he did not fully assimilate that there were two aircraft being called and focused on the fixed-wing contact showing on his TAS.

Warning System Operation and Compliance were assessed as **ineffective** because the Dauphin TAS could not detect the glider.

See and Avoid were assessed as **ineffective** because no avoiding action was taken by the Dauphin due to the very late sighting. It may have been that the glider pilot saw the Dauphin and avoided but this could not be formally assessed.



³ The UK Airprox Board scheme for assessing the Availability, Functionality and Effectiveness of safety barriers can be found on the [UKAB Website](#).