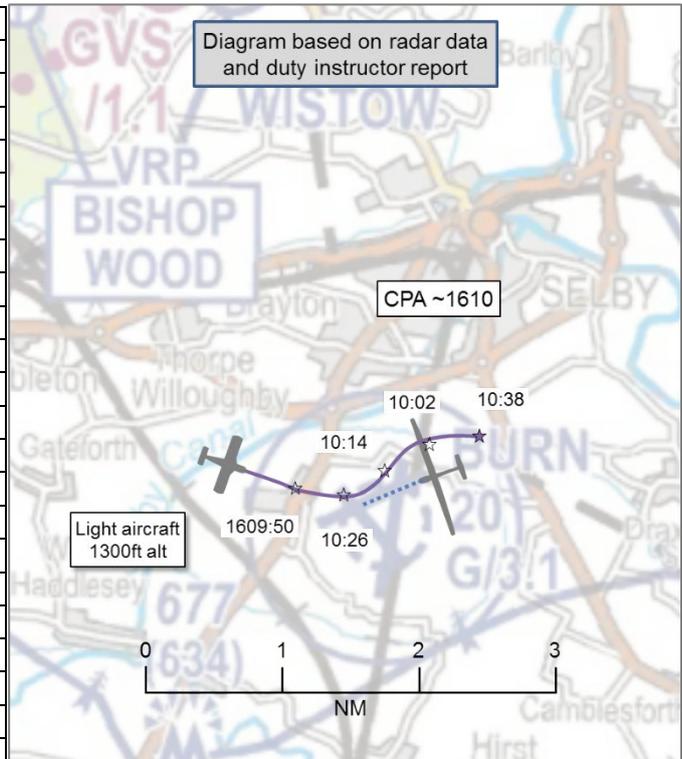


AIRPROX REPORT No 2018254

Date: 23 Aug 2018 Time: 1610Z Position: 5345N 00105W Location: Burn airfield – elev 20ft

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	PW-5 glider	Light aircraft
Operator	Civ Gld	Unknown
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	
Service	AGCS	
Provider	Burn	
Altitude/FL	NK	1200ft
Transponder	Not fitted	A, C
Reported		Not reported
Colours	White	
Lighting	Not fitted	
Conditions	VMC	
Visibility	99km	
Altitude/FL	1000ft	
Altimeter	QFE (NK hPa)	
Heading	160°	
Speed	60kt	
ACAS/TAS	Not fitted	
Separation		
Reported	NK V/150ft H	
Recorded		NK



THE GLIDING CLUB DUTY INSTRUCTOR reports observing a winch-launch on RW25. The glider pilot was experienced and so were the ground crew launching the glider. As the PW-5 progressed toward the top of the launch, a low-wing, single-engine, light-aircraft with ‘retractable gear’ approached the glider on an approximate heading of 160°. Separation reduced before the approaching aeroplane turned towards the east to avoid collision. He opined that at this stage of the launch, the aeroplane would not have been visible to the PW-5 pilot; as the launch progressed, the aeroplane would have become visible as it was carrying out its turn. After the turn, the aeroplane returned to its original course. He surmised that the aeroplane was high-performance and was flying head-on towards the airfield, which, he rationalised, goes some way to explain why it was not seen when checking whether it was clear to launch the PW-5.

He assessed the risk of collision as ‘High’.

THE LIGHT AIRCRAFT PILOT could not be traced.

Factual Background

The weather at Doncaster was recorded as follows:

METAR EGCN 231620Z 23013KT 9999 FEW032 SCT037 18/11 Q1010=

Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

The PW-5 and light-aircraft pilots shared an equal responsibility for collision avoidance and not to operate in such proximity to other aircraft as to create a collision hazard¹. An aircraft operated on or in the vicinity of an aerodrome shall conform with or avoid the pattern of traffic formed by other aircraft in operation².

Comments

Burn Gliding Club

The club decided as a short-term measure to provide learning material to local aerodromes and operators and to invite them to visit to gain a deeper understanding of Burn GC operations. In the medium- to long-term, the club decided to develop more productive relations with local aerodrome users and to maintain contact to ensure airspace users have adequate reminders of flight safety issues.

BGA

Overflight of glider winch sites thankfully appears to be decreasing in frequency but the risks are still very much present. Due to the geometry, if there is a risk of collision both aircraft are unlikely to be able to see each other. Also, it shouldn't require much in the way of imagination to understand the danger from a high-tensile cable connecting the glider to the winch.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a PW-5 and an unknown light-aircraft flew into proximity over Burn glider site at 1610Z on Thursday 23rd August 2018. Both pilots were operating under VFR in VMC, the PW-5 pilot in receipt of an AGCS from Burn radio.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of a report from the gliding club duty instructor, radar photographs and video recordings.

The Board agreed that this type of occurrence almost always carried a great deal of risk, not just from the potential for MAC but because of the nature of the winch-launching which introduced a steel cable to the collision risk. Members reiterated that although there was no rule or regulation prohibiting overflight of gliding sites, it was simple airmanship common-sense to remain clear of the overhead of such sites when at or below winch launching altitudes as marked on the VFR chart.

The Board knew that the PW-5 pilot did not see the other aircraft before CPA, and was not likely to give the glider's nose-up attitude for the majority of the winch launch. For his part, it appeared to the Board that the light-aircraft pilot had either seen the glider at a late stage (or had recognised that he was about to overfly the glider site) and took avoiding action by turning left and then returning to his original track. Members agreed that the cause of the Airprox was that the light-aircraft pilot had flown through an active and promulgated glider site and into conflict with the PW-5, and were satisfied from the available information that safety had been much reduced below the norm. The Board reiterated advice from previous similar Airprox that pilots of powered aircraft should plan to avoid gliding sites by either a wide lateral margin or at least above the maximum winch altitude, and that this included weather conditions which might lead a powered-aircraft pilot to assume incorrectly that gliders would not be flying.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

¹ SERA.3205 Proximity.

² SERA.3225 Operation on and in the Vicinity of an Aerodrome.

Cause: The light aircraft pilot flew through an active and promulgated glider site and into conflict with the PW-5.

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:

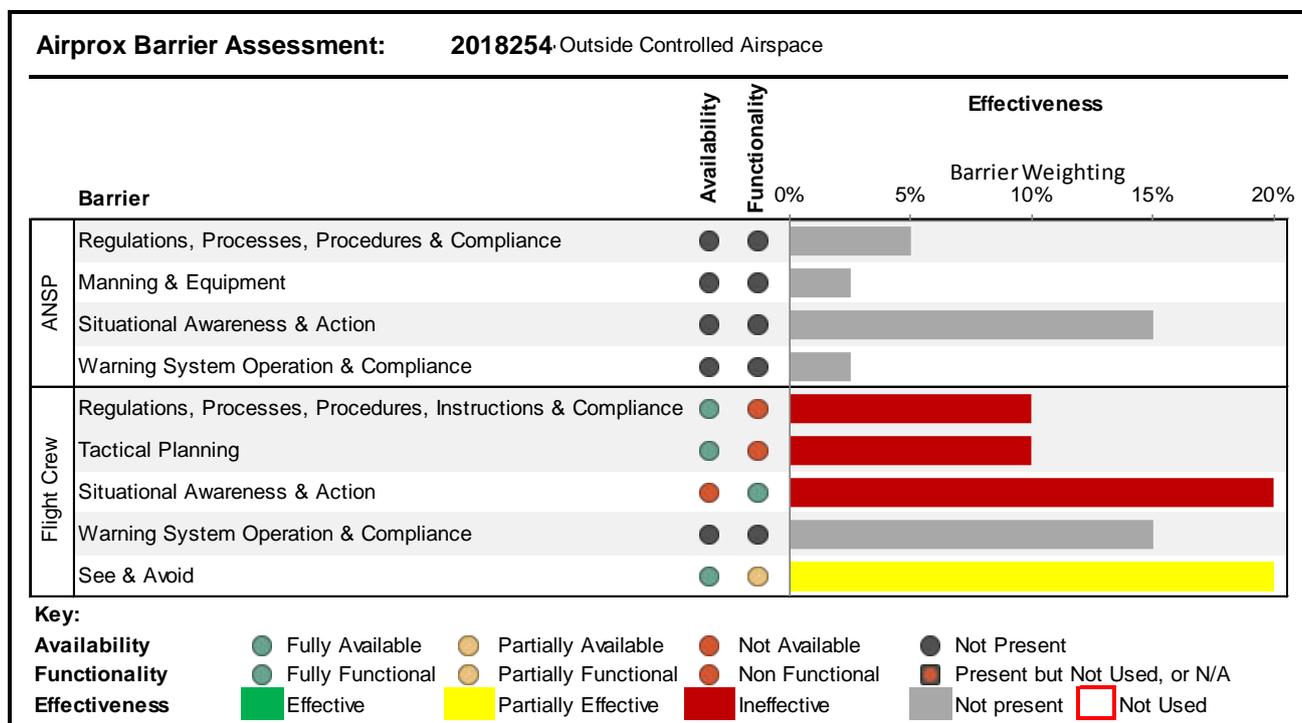
Flight Crew:

Regulations, Processes, Procedures, Instructions and Compliance were assessed as **ineffective** because the light aircraft pilot flew through a promulgated and active glider site, potentially endangering other airspace users.

Tactical Planning was assessed as **ineffective** because the light aircraft pilot’s plan did not route around or above the glider site.

Situational Awareness and Action were assessed as **ineffective** because the PW-5 pilot was not aware of the approaching light aircraft and the light aircraft pilot was apparently unaware of the launching PW-5 until at a late stage.

See and Avoid were assessed as **partially effective** because although the PW-5 pilot did not see the light aircraft, the light aircraft pilot most likely saw the glider at a late stage, when avoiding action was necessary.



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