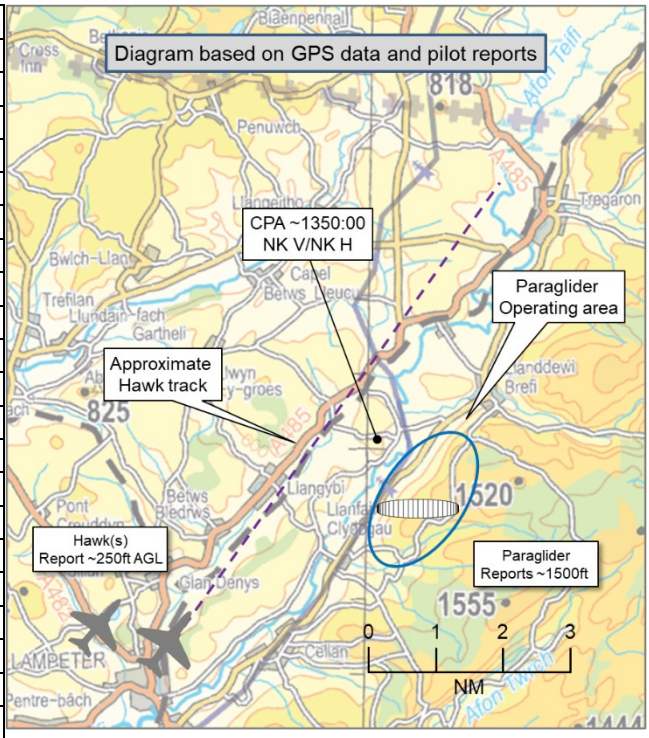
AIRPROX REPORT No 2025095

Date: 20 May 2025 Time: ~1350Z Position: 5210N 00358W Location: IVO Llanddewi Brefi

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	Paraglider	Hawk
Operator	Civ Hang	HQ Air (Trg)
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	None	Listening Out
Provider	N/A	LL Common
Altitude/FL	NK	NK
Transponder	Not fitted	A, C, S
Reported		
Colours	White, red, blue	Black
Lighting	None	HISLs, nav
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	>10km	>10km
Altitude/FL	1500ft	250ft AGL
Altimeter	QNH	RPS
Heading	'*Northeast*'	~030°
Speed	NK	420kt
ACAS/TAS	FLARM	TCAS I
Alert	None	None
Separation at CPA		
Reported	1000ft V/0NM H	NR
Recorded	Not recorded	



THE PARAGLIDER PILOT reports that on the afternoon of Tuesday 20th May they had made a last-minute decision to fly at a mid-Wales paragliding site near Llanddewi Brefi, Wales. Upon arrival, they had observed a low-flying aircraft – possibly a bomber – travelling south-to-north through the valley northeast of the site at approximately 2000ft. The paraglider pilot had realised that a NOTAM had not been issued but decided to proceed with a soaring flight. While airborne, a fighter jet had passed a few kilometres to the north, also at low altitude. It entered the valley, made a turn, and headed south. Although this seemed acceptable, they remained vigilant in case of further activity. A few minutes later, two jets flew past the paragliding site again at low altitude, performing turns within the valley and flying up and down it repeatedly. Given the frequency and proximity of these passes – at altitudes around 1500 to 2000ft – they decided it had been safest to land. Having landed back on the hill and carrying their wing to the car, another jet made a final pass directly overhead at approximately 2000ft. The paraglider pilot found this particularly concerning and unclear in intent. It had been a short flight but, as BHPA pilots, [all] are reminded not to alarm the public, animals, or fellow pilots. Regardless of whether a NOTAM was in place, the number of low passes and the proximity of the jets raised serious safety concerns for a potential collision.

The pilot assessed the risk of collision as 'Medium'.

THE HAWK PILOT reports that this report had been submitted at the request of the Airprox Board and RAF Valley Air Safety Team. Their Hawk Formation (2 x Hawk T2) was tasked with Low Level (LL) Tactical Formation training in LFA 7 on 20 May 25 from 1330-1430. They had been operating on the LL Common frequency throughout the sortie and with TCAS set to TA mode. The Hawk pilot established visual contact with a paraglider on the ridgeline to their east as they had flowed southwest, approximately 3NM southwest of Tregaron. They passed this location 3 times during the next 10min, and each time were visual with the paraglider in question. The quoted times were at approximately 1344, 1347 and 1354. The weather over the spine of LFA 7 had been marginal in places, and the area

in the vicinity of Tregaron and to the west is in the lower ground, hence establishing the formation in that area for training until they had cleared the area to the north. The Hawk pilot [reports that their formation] did not receive any TCAS contacts or communications on the LL Common frequency, which is normal when encountering paragliders at LL. There had been no NOTAM or late warning associated with this paraglider in the vicinity of Tregaron. There is, however, a paraglider symbol on the LFC in that approximate area. The Hawk pilot did not consider their proximity to the paraglider to be unsafe or constitute a loss of safe separation at any time, hence no DASOR or Airprox report [had been filed] following their sortie.

The pilot perceived the severity of the incident as 'Low'.

Factual Background

The weather at Cardiff Airport was recorded as follows:

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METAR EGFF 201350Z AUTO 18005KT 150V210 9999 NCD 19/06 Q1021=
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Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

Neither aircraft displayed on radar at or around the time of the reported event. The diagram at page 1 is constructed utilising pilot reports and a GPS log file showing the Paraglider pilot's operating area. The Paraglider and Hawk pilots shared an equal responsibility for collision avoidance and not to operate in such proximity to other aircraft as to create a collision hazard.[1]

Comments

HQ Air Command

The Hawks had been conducting a tactical formation sortie in LFA 7, which is routinely used for low flying training. Due to poor weather in the centre of the LFA, they had been restricted to the western side and utilised the area of Class G airspace in the lower ground in the vicinity of Tregaron. As the paragliding activity was not NOTAMed, and there was no late warning, the crews were unable to deconflict their sortie from that of the paraglider at the planning stage. Due to the terrain and operating heights, it was not practical for either the Hawks or the paraglider to have been in receipt of an ATS, and neither party had appeared on radar. As the paraglider had not been listening out on the LL Common frequency and was not carrying electronic conspicuity equipment [compatible with that on the Hawks], the only method of deconfliction which remained had been see-and-avoid. The Hawks were visual with the paraglider throughout the event and had displaced their activity to the northwest side of the valley while the paraglider was airborne. This provided in excess of 1NM horizontal displacement in addition to the approximately 1000ft vertical separation. Unfortunately, the Hawks could not communicate their intentions to the paraglider pilot, whose decision to land had been understandable.

BHPA

The BHPA notes that, once again, the paraglider pilot had been carrying an EC device and although the Hawks were equipped with TCAS, this device would not have picked up the paraglider pilot's EC transmission and triggered an alert. We also note that the Hawk pilots were monitoring the Low Level radio frequency. Unfortunately, this is not a barrier that the majority of BHPA members are familiar with or would utilise due to their non-use of air-band radios and ATC services.

The BHPA commends both pilots' lookout that they both saw each other and that, although the paraglider pilot at first remained extremely vigilant to the Hawks' flightpaths, they wisely decided in the end that it would be safest to land. BHPA pilots are reminded during their training that military

[1] (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity. MAA RA 2307 paragraphs 1 and 2.

low flying can take place anywhere in the UK between 250ft and 1000ft AGL – especially in Wales, the Lake District, Scotland and other AIAAs. A warning to this effect is even written around the margins of aviation charts. Pilots are also reminded of the need to submit a CANP if they intend flying in an area known for military low flying and especially if they intend flying mid-week.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a paraglider and a Hawk flew into proximity in the vicinity of Llanddewi Brefi at approximately 1350Z on Tuesday 25th May 2025. The Paraglider pilot was operating under VFR in VMC and not in receipt of a Flight Information Service and the Hawk pilot was operating under VFR in VMC and had been Listening Out on the LL Common frequency.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from both pilots and GPS data. Relevant contributory factors mentioned during the Board's discussions are highlighted within the text in bold, with the numbers referring to the Contributory Factors table displayed in Part C.

The Board noted the nature of the flight undertaken by the paraglider pilot, that they had been operating in Class G airspace where military and General Aviation aircraft can often be found in a variety of training exercises and that the pilot had likely been startled to see them within relatively close proximity to their own operating area. Although the paraglider pilot had carried an electronic conspicuity unit capable of detecting most sailplanes and a number of lighter GA aircraft, it had been incompatible with the equipment utilised by the Hawk(s) (**CF2**). Members recognised that the pilot's concern of the Hawk(s) proximity (**CF3**) had led to the decision to bring their flight to an early conclusion and were in agreement that this had been a sensible course of action in such circumstances.

In reviewing the actions of the Hawk pilot(s), members accepted that this is a commonly utilised area for such work and that weather effects can increase traffic density where pilots seek to complete their tasks as efficiently as possible. In this case, the Hawk pilots had been unlikely to receive a Flight Information Service and had elected to utilise the Low Level Common frequency to alert others to their activity. The Board agreed that it had been unfortunate that the other pilot in this case had not been able to monitor that frequency. The Board noted that the BHPA comment highlighted the difficulties such pilots face in this aspect and that they aim to maintain a sound lookout and carry, where possible, electronic conspicuity equipment to raise their and others' situational awareness of their operation. It was apparent to the Board that, in this case, that neither pilot had achieved situational awareness of the presence of the other (**CF1**) but both had achieved and retained good visual contact with the other. Board members felt that, in this case, there had been no risk of collision and that normal safety parameters in Class G airspace had been maintained, awarding this event a Risk Category E.

CF1: Neither pilot had any situational awareness of the presence of the other.

CF2: The conspicuity equipment carried by both the paraglider and the Hawk(s) had been unable to register any electronic emissions from the other aircraft.

CF3: The paraglider pilot had been concerned by the proximity of the Hawk(s).

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

	2025095			
CF	**Factor**	**Description**	**ECCAIRS Amplification**	**UKAB Amplification**
	Flight Elements			
	• Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action			
1	Contextual	• Situational Awareness and Sensory Events	Events involving a flight crew's awareness and perception of situations	Pilot had no, late, inaccurate or only generic, Situational Awareness
	• Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance			
2	Technical	• ACAS/TCAS System Failure	An event involving the system which provides information to determine aircraft position and is primarily independent of ground installations	Incompatible CWS equipment
	• See and Avoid			
3	Human Factors	• Perception of Visual Information	Events involving flight crew incorrectly perceiving a situation visually and then taking the wrong course of action or path of movement	Pilot was concerned by the proximity of the other aircraft

Degree of Risk: E.

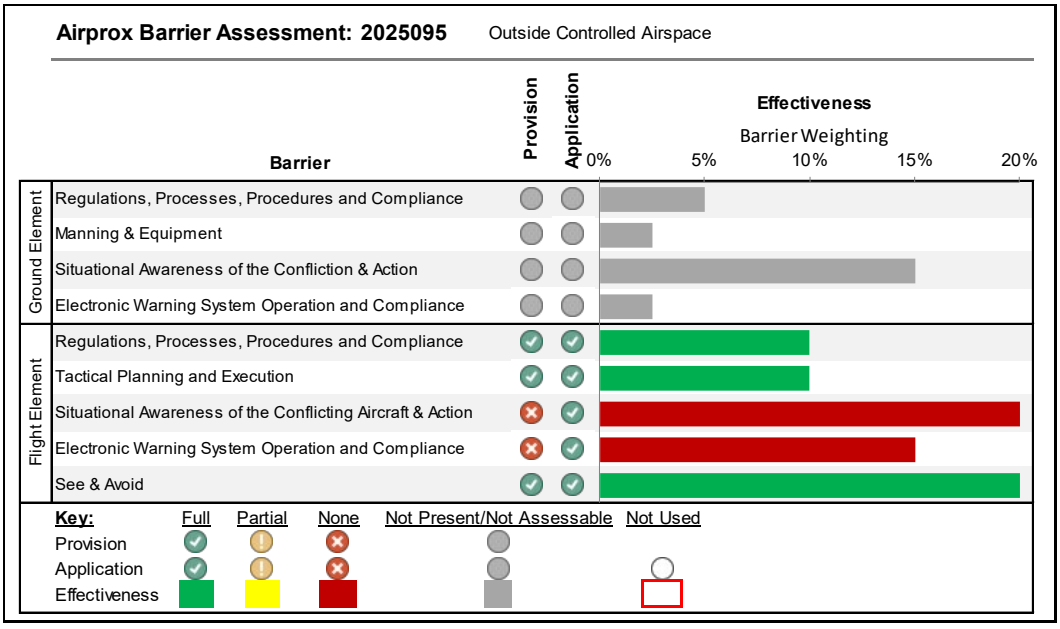
Safety Barrier Assessment[2]

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

Flight Elements:

Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action were assessed as **ineffective** because neither pilot had any situational awareness of the presence of the other

Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance were assessed as **ineffective** because the electronic conspicuity equipment carried by both aircraft had been incompatible with that carried by the other.



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