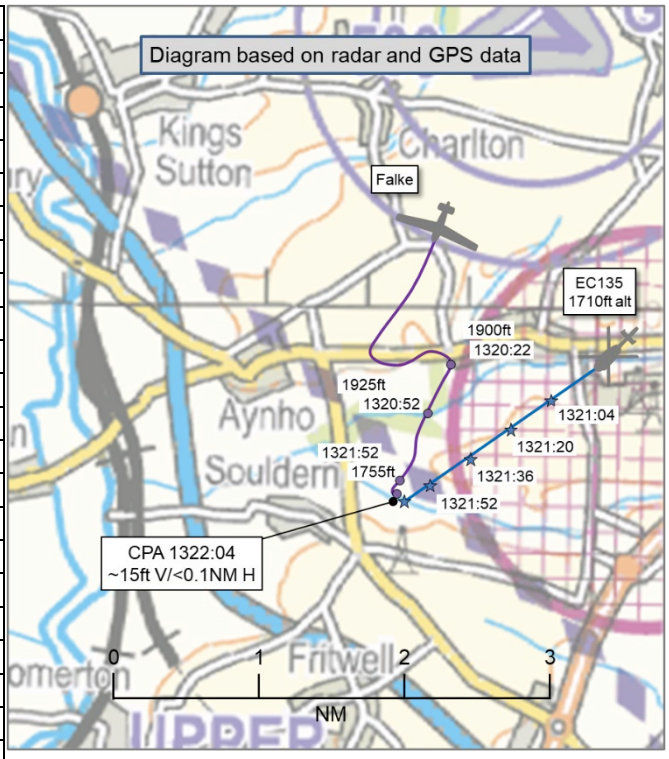
AIRPROX REPORT No 2025205

Date: 18 Sep 2025 Time: 1322Z Position: 5158N 00113W Location: Souldern

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	EC135	Falke
Operator	Civ Comm	Civ Gld
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	AGCS	None
Provider	Turweston	N/A
Altitude/FL	1710ft	~1695ft
Transponder	A, C, S	Not fitted
Reported		
Colours	Yellow	Red and white
Lighting	Position, ldg, HISL	White strobe
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	>10km	>10km
Altitude/FL	1675ft	1300ft AGL
Altimeter	QNH	QFE
Heading	233°	NK
Speed	120kt	45kt
ACAS/TAS	TAS, SkyEcho	FLARM
Alert	None	None
	Separation at CPA	
Reported	0ft V/100ft H	NR
Recorded	~15ft V/<0.1NM H	



THE EC135 PILOT reports that they were positioning from [departure airfield] to [destination airfield]. They were straight and level at 1650ft approximately 6.5NM from Turweston in the process of changing to Brize Norton LARS. A scan of the cockpit instruments showed a clear TAS display amongst other normal parameters. On looking up, the other aircraft was seen in a climbing left-hand turn towards them. Both front seat crew members saw the aircraft at the same time. An immediate left bank was made and the two aircraft passed starboard side to starboard side with the other aircraft still climbing. There was no TAS alert and, on checking the display as soon as the conflict was past, there were still no other transponding aircraft shown and none appeared in the minutes following. The EC135 pilot reports that they had been flying into sun and, in places, a bright layer of thin cloud was 200ft above them. They believe that the [other] aircraft may have been traveling on the same course as them initially, or in a climb, with the EC135 crew being unaware and catching it up. No landing or position lights were seen and they think it may have been the climbing left turn which allowed the shape of the wings and fuselage to be spotted.

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

THE FALKE PILOT reports that they had been on a training flight from [departure airfield]. HASELL checks had been completed for low-speed manoeuvres. Whilst in a left-hand low speed turn, a helicopter was seen approaching at high speed.

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

THE TURWESTON AIR/GROUND OPERATOR reports that the EC135 had been with them for fuel and then departed to return to […]. They do not recall any incident being reported on the Turweston frequency from either the helicopter pilot or any other aircraft pilot talking to them.

Factual Background

The weather at Brize Norton Airfield was recorded as follows:

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METAR EGVN 181320Z 24006KT 9999 -RA FEW015 SCT017 20/17 Q1018 NOSIG RMK WHT WHT=
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UKAB Secretariat

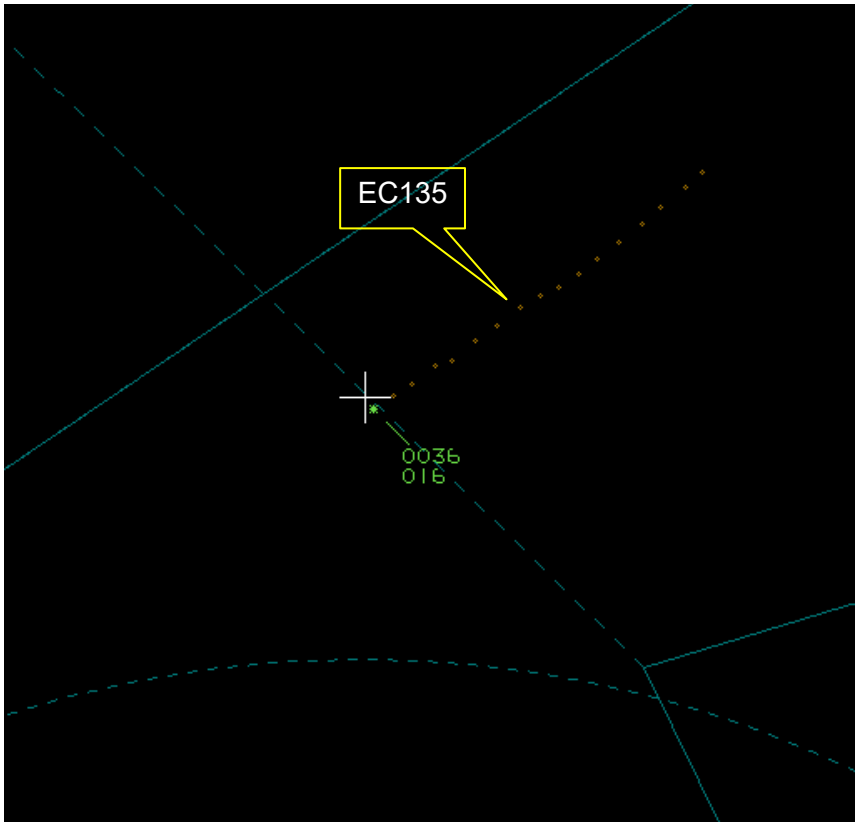

Figure 1: At CPA (1322:04). White cross marks reported CPA.

The EC135 was tracked via radar and identified through Mode S data. The Falke was not carrying a transponder and was not captured by radar as a primary return, but the pilot kindly provided a GPS log file which was used to create the diagram at page 1 and allowed a comparison of relative altitudes.

The EC135 and Falke 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] If the incident geometry is considered as converging then the EC135 pilot was required to give way to the Falke.[2]

Comments

BGA

The helicopter was approaching the Falke from behind and below before the latter's left-hand turn and may therefore have been obscured from the Falke crew by the motor glider's low wing.

The carry-on CAP 1391 ADS-B-based TAS on board the EC135 can be configured to receive transmissions from the EC equipment carried by almost all gliders, glider tow-planes and many motor gliders (including the SF-25 Falke involved in this incident), and display this traffic via

[1] (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity.
[2] (UK) SERA.3210 Right-of-way (c)(2) Converging.

participating EFB applications. Using this option would provide a useful additional safety barrier in airspace where gliders and motor gliders operate.

The EC equipment fitted to the motor glider (and almost all gliders) warns of impending conflicts with other similarly-equipped aircraft, but basic installations do not detect aircraft equipped only with a transponder or a CAP 1391 ADS-B-out device, as the EC135 was in this case. However, recent versions of this EC equipment can optionally include a 1090MHz receiver and thereby warn of conflicts with transponder and ADS-B-out-equipped aircraft. Updating glider EC hardware to add such a 1090MHz receiver would provide a useful additional safety barrier in airspace with a high density of transponder or ADS-B-out equipped aircraft.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when an EC135 and a Falke flew into proximity at Souldern at 1322Z on Thursday 18th September 2025. The EC135 pilot was operating under VFR in VMC in receipt of an Air/Ground Communication Service from Turweston, and the Falke pilot was operating under VFR in VMC and not in receipt of a Flight Information Service.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from both pilots, radar photographs/video recordings, GPS track data and a report from the Air/Ground Operator involved. 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.

Members firstly discussed the actions of the EC135 pilot, noting that they had been re-positioning for tasking and had been equipped with both a Traffic Alerting System (TAS) and an active electronic conspicuity (EC) unit. It was noted that these units had not received any indications from the Falke (**CF3**) and, as the pilot had not at that point established radio contact and a service with their chosen provider (Brize Norton) (**CF1**), this had left them with no situational awareness of the presence of the Falke (**CF2**). Board discussion highlighted the lack of transponder carriage by the Falke, and members accepted that this is not unusual amongst aircraft operators with limited power availability but noted that this had effectively negated the alerting potential for the EC135's TAS equipment.

Moving to the actions of the Falke pilot, Board members noted that the aircraft had been on a training flight and, having completed appropriate checks, the pilot had initiated a left-hand turn and become visual at a late stage (**CF4**) with the EC135 passing to their right-hand side. The Falke pilot did not report any additional avoiding action. The Falke had not been equipped with a transponder and had not been in receipt of a Flight Information Service with any of the available providers (**CF1**), and the Board agreed that this had contributed to their lack of situational awareness of the proximity of the EC135 (**CF2**). The Board noted that the Falke had been equipped with an electronic conspicuity unit common to much of the gliding fleet in the UK, but it had been incompatible with that carried by the EC135 (**CF3**).

Members discussed the availability of suitable air traffic services in this area and accepted that Brize Norton LARS is a perfectly valid option if that unit is operating but wished to highlight that Oxford also provides similar services and was equally able to advise on both squawking and, in many cases, non-squawking aircraft in the area. Given that the UK AIP ENR 5.2 entry for the Oxford AAIA only mentions the availability of Brize Radar as an ATS provider, members felt that pilots could be usefully guided to try contacting Oxford Radar should a LARS be unavailable from Brize. The Board therefore resolved to make a recommendation for '*The CAA to review the remarks for the Oxford AIAA within the UK AIP ENR 5.2 with regard to advising pilots of possible alternative radar service providers when operating within the AIAA*'.

In considering the contribution from the Turweston Air/Ground operator, members noted that the event had occurred approximately 7NM from their overhead, that the EC135 pilot had been in the process of switching to Brize Norton for a LARS service and that no event had been reported via RT. They acknowledged that there had been little that the Turweston AGO could have offered in this case.

Concluding their discussion, members turned their attention to the determination of the risk of collision. They noted that neither pilot had any advance situational awareness of the presence of the other aircraft (**CF2**) and that both had achieved only late sightings of the other (**CF4**) at which the EC135 pilot had initiated avoiding action thereby reducing the risk of collision. Members agreed that safety margins had been reduced much below the norm and were in agreement that there had been a risk of collision (**CF5**), assigning a Risk Category B to this event.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

	2025205			
CF	**Factor**	**Description**	**ECCAIRS Amplification**	**UKAB Amplification**
	Flight Elements			
	• Tactical Planning and Execution			
1	Human Factors	• Communications by Flight Crew with ANS	An event related to the communications between the flight crew and the air navigation service.	Pilot did not request appropriate ATS service or communicate with appropriate provider
	• Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action			
2	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			
3	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			
4	Human Factors	• Identification/ Recognition	Events involving flight crew not fully identifying or recognising the reality of a situation	Late sighting by one or both pilots
	• Outcome Events			
5	Contextual	• Near Airborne Collision with Aircraft	An event involving a near collision by an aircraft with an aircraft, balloon, dirigible or other piloted air vehicles	

Degree of Risk: B.

Recommendation: The CAA to review the remarks for the Oxford AIAA within the UK AIP ENR 5.2 with regard to advising pilots of possible alternative radar service providers when operating within the AIAA.

Safety Barrier Assessment[3]

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

Ground Elements:

Situational Awareness of the Confliction and Action were assessed as **not used** because the Turweston Air/Ground Operator could not influence the Airprox.

Flight Elements:

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

Tactical Planning and Execution was assessed as **partially effective** because, at the time of the event, the EC135 pilot had not established a service with Brize Norton LARS, and the Falke pilot could have utilised a Flight Information Service whilst operating in the area.

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

Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance were assessed as **ineffective** because, although both aircraft had carried electronic conspicuity equipment, neither had been able to receive electronic emissions from the other.

See and Avoid were assessed as **partially effective** because both pilots had achieved only a late sighting of the other aircraft.