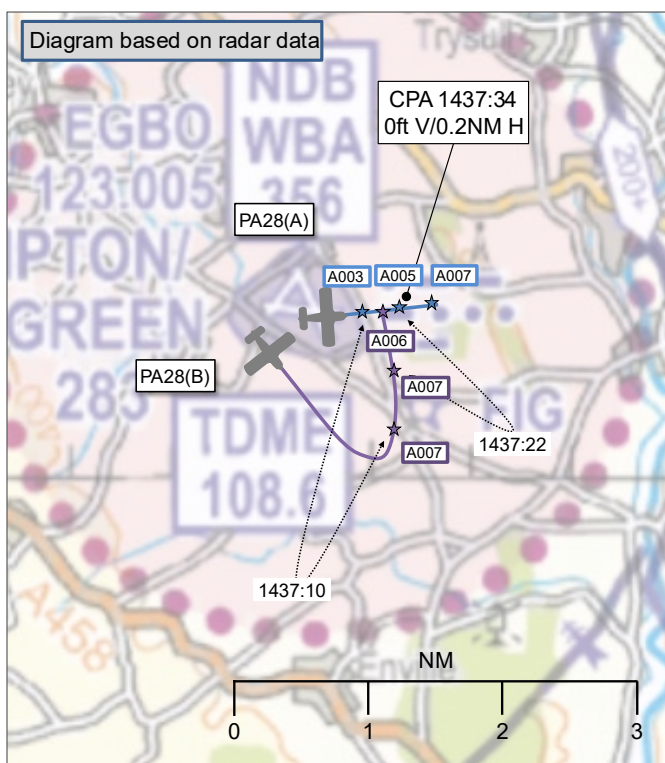


AIRPROX REPORT No 2025213

Date: 26 Sep 2025 Time: 1438Z Position: 5230N 00214W Location: Wolverhampton

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	PA28(A)	PA28(B)
Operator	Civ FW	Civ FW
Airspace	Wolverhampton ATZ	Wolverhampton ATZ
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	AFIS	AFIS
Provider	Wolverhampton Info	Wolverhampton Info
Altitude/FL	700ft	600ft
Transponder	A, C	A, C, S
Reported		
Colours	White	White, Blue
Lighting	None	Nav, Landing
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	>10km	>10km
Altitude/FL	600ft	500ft
Altimeter	QNH (1021hPa)	QFE
Heading	100°	100°
Speed	74kt	70kt
ACAS/TAS	Not fitted	Not fitted
Separation at CPA		
Reported	100ft V/750m H	500ft V/500ft H
Recorded	0ft V/0.2NM H	



THE PA28(A) PILOT reports that whilst positioned at Alpha One for RW10 at Wolverhampton, they were conducting engine run-up checks prior to departure. During this time, they observed [PA28(B)] established on the base-leg and pointed the traffic out, maintaining full awareness of all aircraft on the frequency. After completing the checks, they reported ready for departure. Wolverhampton Information responded, “Nothing known to affect, report lined up.” They acknowledged with “Wilco” and taxied onto the runway to line up. During the line-up, they again observed [PA28(B)] on base-leg, not yet turning final, and assessed that there was sufficient spacing to allow for a safe departure. While completing lineup checks, a helicopter reported “ready for lift.” The Information controller then authorised the helicopter to “lift and cross Runway 10,” which, if actioned immediately, would have obstructed their own intended departure. Shortly afterwards, [PA28(B) pilot], now on final approach, reported going around. Concerned that the aircraft might overfly or pass close to the runway centreline, they queried the controller regarding the traffic’s position. Wolverhampton Information advised that the aircraft was “well clear to the right.” They subsequently gained visual with [PA28(B)] approximately two miles to the right of the aerodrome, tracking away on roughly a 45° heading. The pilot did not state their intentions.

With the helicopter clear of the runway and no reported conflicting traffic, they commenced the take-off roll. The ground roll and rotation were normal. At approximately 300ft, they observed [PA28(B)] begin a left turn towards their position. Due to trees and a slight incline off the end of RW10, they maintained runway heading and continued the climb while keeping the traffic in sight. As they climbed through approximately 600ft, [PA28(B)] was now observed flying a right-hand crosswind leg back toward the active left-hand circuit. The aircraft appeared to be at approximately 700ft on 1013hPa, equating to around 1000ft true altitude with the local QNH of 1021hPa. This placed [PA28(B)] converging towards their intended departure leg. To maintain safe separation, they made a slight left turn and reduced the climb rate, before resuming the normal departure profile once clear of the traffic.

The pilot assessed the risk of collision as ‘Medium’.

THE PA28(B) PILOT reports that they had just turned onto final approach for RW10 as the other aircraft entered the runway to take-off. They continued to descend to approximately 500ft when it became clear the runway would not be clear. They proceeded to turn onto an upwind heading, climbing to around 600ft on the deadside. They radioed the tower and advised of their actions and intentions to remain deadside before turning behind, and above, the departing traffic. The AFISO acknowledged their actions/intentions which ensured they remained a safe distance from the other aircraft and in visual contact throughout until [the other aircraft] had departed to the east and they had rejoined the circuit. The pilot of the departing aircraft commented over the radio that they might wish to make a report. Being a student pilot, they checked with their instructor once they had landed, who checked with the tower. Both suggested that they had taken the correct actions at the correct time. At no point during their initial descent, the go-around climb, the upwind leg or their stated turn to rejoin the circuit did they lose sight of the other aircraft.

The pilot assessed the risk of collision as 'None'.

THE PA28(B) INSTRUCTOR reports that, at the time in question, the student pilot was in their second hour of solo consolidation circuits, having already completed their first solo and having done 50min of solo circuits. They [the instructor] completed a checkout flight with the student prior to sending them solo, between 15:05-15:25, and they discussed the go-around procedure prior to them flying solo.

Observing from the ground, they could not see that there were any issues, radio procedures were very good and their general circuit pattern was good. Upon landing, they stated that they were forced to go-around due to another aircraft taking off whilst they were on a final approach, which was subsequently the other aircraft that has filed the Airprox report. The instructor made contact with the duty AFISOs on the day at Halfpenny Green. Both of them stated that, from their point of view, there were no issues with the go-around and also that they did not feel that there was an Airprox. The view of the AFISOs was that the pilot initiated and flew an appropriate go-around procedure.

They debriefed the student pilot and they concluded that the student was on a final approach and had priority, being a landing aircraft. Ahead of them, [the pilot of] another aircraft had decided to take off, which reduced their separation. The student took appropriate action and had the departing aircraft in sight as it took off, and remained clear before re-establishing in the air traffic circuit. The student did not feel that there was any reduced safety minima and ultimately the [pilot of the] departing aircraft could have delayed their take-off but chose to depart in front of a landing aircraft.

THE WOLVEHAMPTON AFISO reports PA28(B) was on final, with PA28(A) lined up. A helicopter crossed RW10 for departure. The runway occupancy caused [the pilot of] PA28(B) to go around. The "close proximity" reported by [the pilot of] PA28(A) upon leaving the frequency was not observed by the Tower.

Factual Background

The weather at Birmingham was recorded as follows:

METAR EGBB 261420Z 08006KT 050V140 9999 FEW036 OVC045 15/06 Q1021=

Analysis and Investigation

CAA ATSI

We asked 3 questions of the unit (in **BOLD** below together with their responses). With no media being available for review by ATSI, ATSI cannot corroborate or offer opinion on the answers.

Unit's response:

Based on our review of the event, the helicopter departure does not appear to have contributed directly to this Airprox. When crossing the active runway, traffic lined up continued to hold. This eventually caused traffic on final to go around. The Airprox itself relates to the interaction between

the go-around traffic and the PA28(A) departing afterwards. Notably, the PA28(A) pilot did not report any concern at the time; the comment was only made later when changing frequency en-route. The AFISO also reports that they did not observe any close proximity during the sequence.

Regarding the specific queries:

Was the helicopter departure appropriate at that moment?

Yes. The helicopter's movement across the runway was conducted normally and did not create any conflict. The aircraft already lined up were held appropriately, and the sequence that followed was unrelated to the helicopter's departure.

What did AC2 (go-around) state as their intentions?

The pilot of AC2 did not initially report the go-around. The AFISO identified it first and transmitted: "[C/S], I see you are going around. Go around at your discretion, wind 120/3 kts." AC2 pilot responded only with their callsign and did not communicate further intentions at that stage. They later stated they intended to position behind the departing PA28 but subsequently reported that they were in fact inside the departing traffic, joining the circuit.

What Traffic Information was passed by the AFISO?

When the [pilot of the] aircraft lined up on the runway requested the position of the go-around traffic, the AFISO advised: "He's behind the tower at the moment, well out of your way, sir." The [pilot of the] aircraft on the runway then advised that they were commencing take-off.

Although the recording system would not allow us to save or export the audio, we were able to listen to the transmissions at the time of the Airprox and produced a manual transcript [which was made available to the Board for reference].

UKAB Secretariat

An analysis of the NATS radar replay was undertaken, and PA28(B) could be seen and identified using Mode S Data and indicating 500ft (radar QNH 1021hPa), although the track was subject to some radar jitter, probably due to the altitude of the aircraft (Figure 1). Other data sources were also analysed, but only showed both aircraft after the event in MLAT and not via ADS-B.

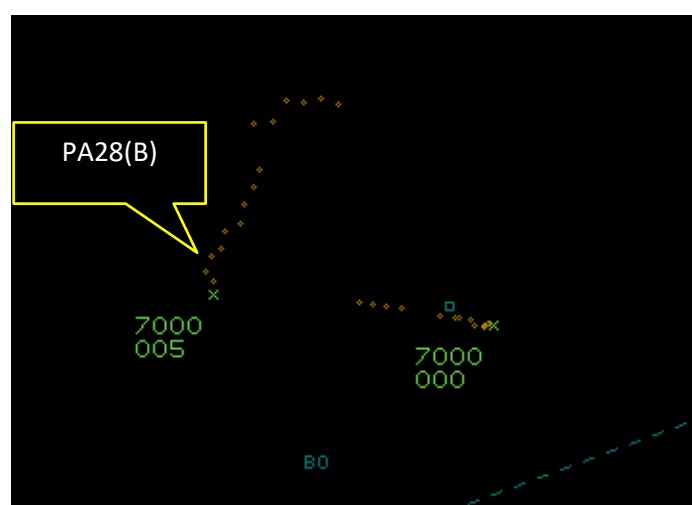


Figure 1: 1435:33

The PA28(B) pilot appeared to set up for finals on an approach and conducted the go-around at around 1436:11 (Figure 2).

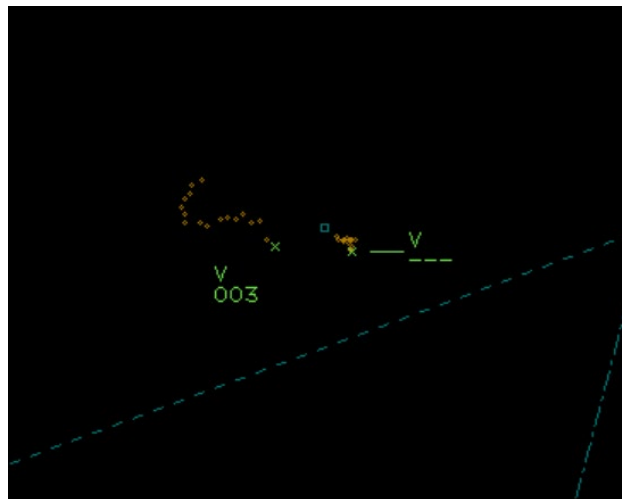


Figure 2: 1436:11

PA28(A) appeared on the radar replay at 1437:09 and could be seen climbing out of the airfield, as described by the pilot (Figure 3). At this stage, the PA28(B) pilot appeared to have turned left onto a northerly heading.

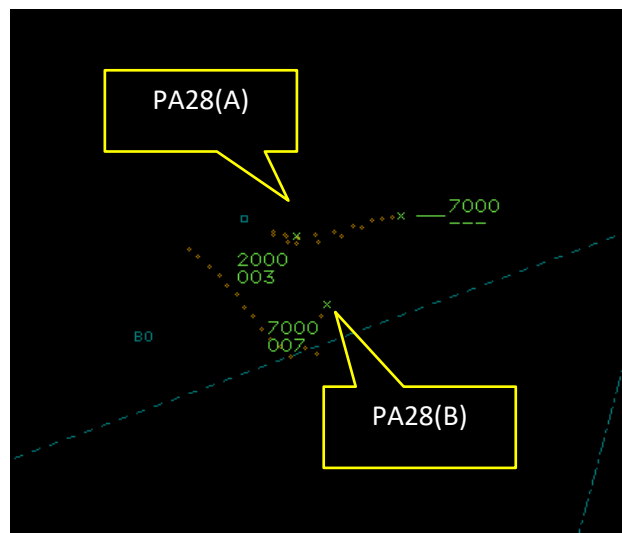


Figure 3 – 1437:17

PA28(B) continued to head towards PA28(A), as PA28(A) climbed out (Figure 4 and 5).

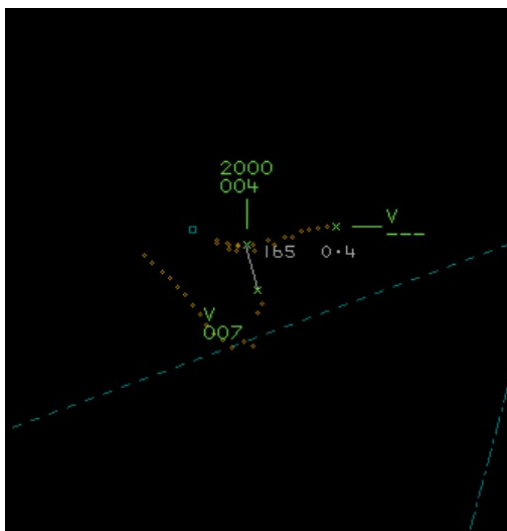


Figure 4 – 1437:19

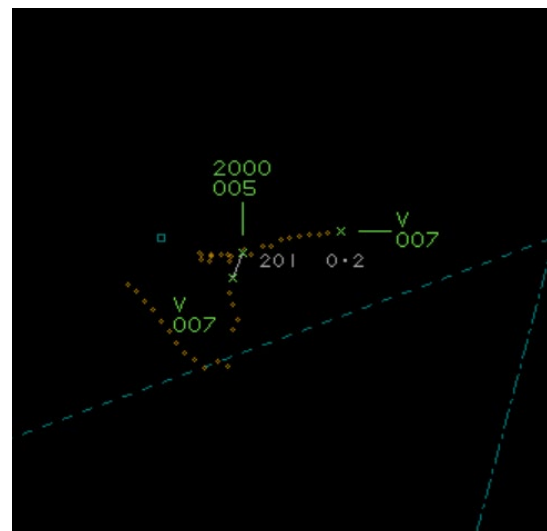


Figure 5 – 1437:26

CPA occurred at 1437:35 with PA28(B) crossing 0.2NM behind PA28(A) at the same level.

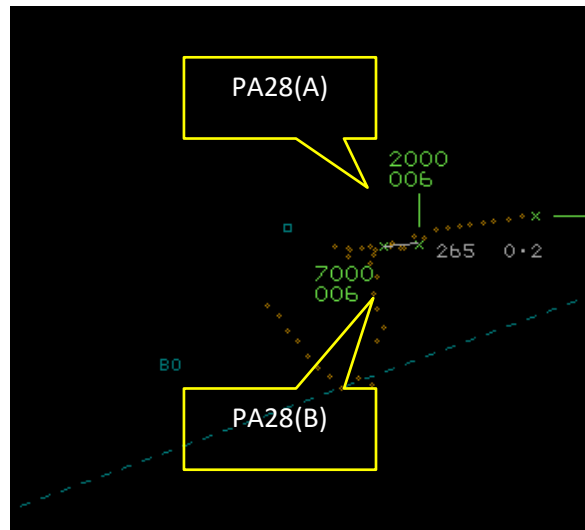


Figure 6 – CPA 1437:34

The PA28(A) and PA28(B) 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 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 operation.²

Summary

An Airprox was reported when two PA28s flew into proximity at Wolverhampton airfield at 1438Z on Friday 26th September 2025. Both pilots were operating under VFR in VMC and in receipt of an AFIS from Wolverhampton Information.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from both pilots, radar photographs/video recordings, a report from the AFISO involved and reports from the appropriate operating authorities. 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 members agreed that both pilots had been on the Wolverhampton frequency and both had been aware of the intentions of the other. The pilot of PA28(B) had been visual with PA28(A) as they had lined-up for take-off in front of them, and PA28(B)'s pilot had therefore elected to conduct a go-around. PA28(A)'s pilot had been aware of the PA28(B) conducting the go-around behind them and had requested Traffic Information from the AFISO, which members commended. However, once airborne and climbing out, the PA28(A) pilot had become concerned by the proximity of the PA28(B), as the PA28(B) pilot had turned onto crosswind to rejoin the circuit downwind. Nevertheless, the PA28(B) pilot had been fully aware of the position of the PA28(A) at all times.

The Board then discussed the actions of the AFISO. Members were concerned that, in allowing the helicopter to cross ahead of the PA28(A) lined up on the runway, the AFISO had overstepped their jurisdiction in accordance with CAP797³ and had been acting in a manner more akin to a controller. Advisors with AFISO experience noted that an AFISO could control aircraft on the ground, and could have held the PA28(A) at the holding point, but in allowing the PA28(A) pilot to line-up and hold, they had effectively allocated the runway to them and so should not have then allowed the helicopter to cross the runway ahead. Unfortunately, the Wolverhampton RT provided had not covered exactly what

¹ (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity.

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

³ CAP797 Flight Information Service Manual Chapter 8.93

the AFISO had told the PA28(A) pilot when they first lined them up, and members were surprised that the Wolverhampton investigation had not covered this and, furthermore, had deemed that the actions of the AFISO had been appropriate.

Concluding their discussion, members appreciated that the pilot of the PA28(A) had been concerned by the proximity of the PA28(B). Notwithstanding, members agreed that both pilots had had sufficient time to have visually acquired the other aircraft and to have considered the safest course of action. Members were satisfied that the actions taken by each pilot had ensured that the separation between the aircraft had been adequate and that there had been no risk of collision. The Board assigned Risk Category E to this event and members agreed on the following contributory factors:

CF1: The AFISO regulations were not fully complied with when lining up an aircraft on the runway and allowing the helicopter to cross.

CF2: The decision to hold the PA28(A) on the runway had meant that the PA28(B) pilot had been required to conduct a go-around.

CF3: PA28(A) pilot was concerned by the proximity of the other aircraft.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

2025213				
CF	Factor	Description	ECCAIRS Amplification	UKAB Amplification
Ground Elements				
• Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance				
1	Human Factors	• ATM Regulatory Deviation	An event involving a deviation from an Air Traffic Management Regulation.	Regulations and/or procedures not fully complied with
• Situational Awareness and Action				
2	Human Factors	• Traffic Management Information Provision	An event involving traffic management information provision	The ANS instructions contributed to the Airprox
Flight Elements				
• 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 Assessment⁴

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

Ground Elements:

Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance were assessed as **partially effective** because the AFISO had permitted two aircraft to use the runway, outwith their remit according to CAP797.

Situational Awareness of the Confliction and Action were assessed as **partially effective** because the decision to line-up the PA28(A) had resulted in the pilot of PA28(B) having to conduct a go-around.

⁴ The UK Airprox Board scheme for assessing the Availability, Functionality and Effectiveness of safety barriers can be found on the [UKAB Website](#).

Airprox Barrier Assessment: 2025213		Outside Controlled Airspace						
Barrier		Provision	Application	Effectiveness				
				Barrier Weighting				
				0%	5%	10%	15%	20%
Ground Element	Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance							
	Manning & Equipment							
	Situational Awareness of the Confliction & Action							
	Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance							
Flight Element	Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance							
	Tactical Planning and Execution							
	Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft & Action							
	Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance							
	See & Avoid							
Key:		Full	Partial	None	Not Present/Not Assessable	Not Used		
Provision								
Application								
Effectiveness								