

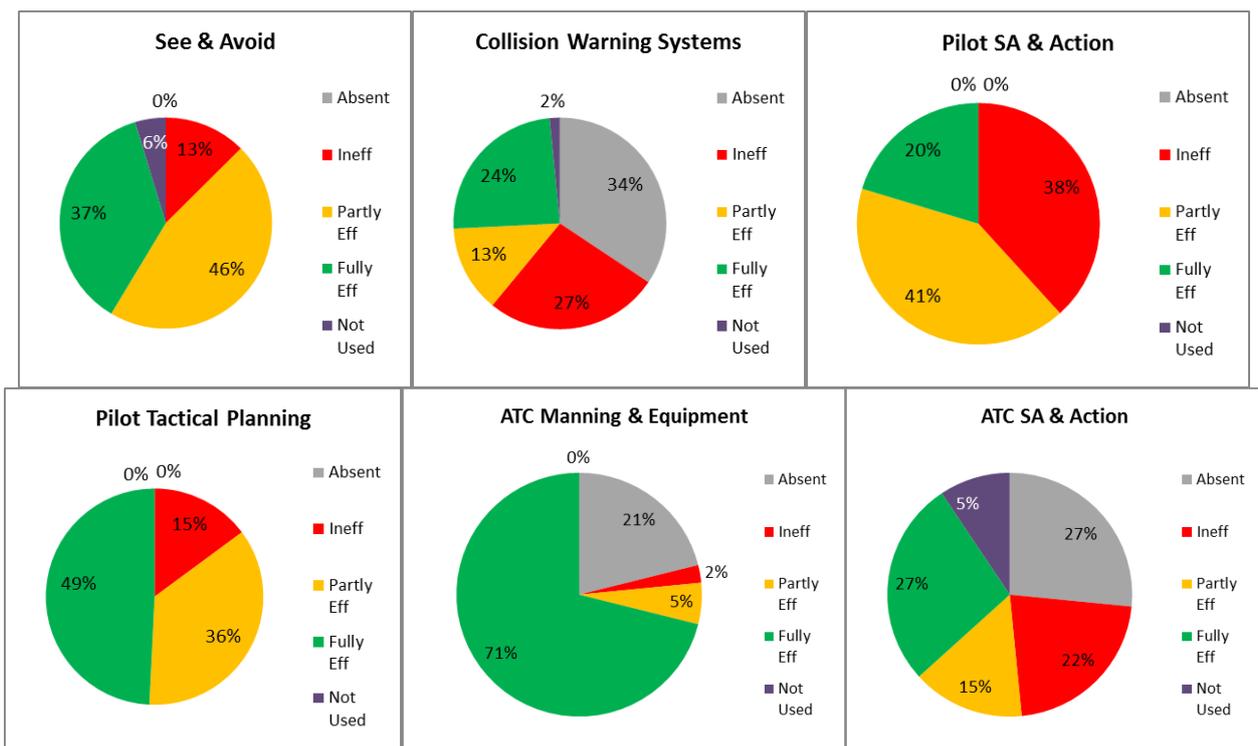
Avoiding collisions – a monthly update from Director UK Airprox Board giving some learning themes for recreational pilots.

The Airprox Board assessed 26 incidents during the January 2018 meeting. Of these, 19 were aircraft-to-aircraft incidents, with 11 assessed as having a definite risk of collision (1 x Category A (providence played a major role) and 10 x Category B (safety was much reduced due to serendipity, misjudgement, inaction, or late sighting)).

This month's predominant theme was flawed situational awareness (including poor planning and not following procedures) which was evident in 9 incidents. Some of these incidents involved pilots not assimilating information passed to them by ATC; others where distraction caused pilots to lose track of what was going on as they prioritised other tasks; and some where ATC did not pass sufficient Traffic Information for the pilot to form a correct mental model. Late sightings/conflict in Class G airspace accounted for 5 other incidents - a fairly predictable figure given that this month's assessments were for the tail-end of the summer months (including the August Bank Holiday) when the airspace is busier and exposure to potential collisions increases accordingly.

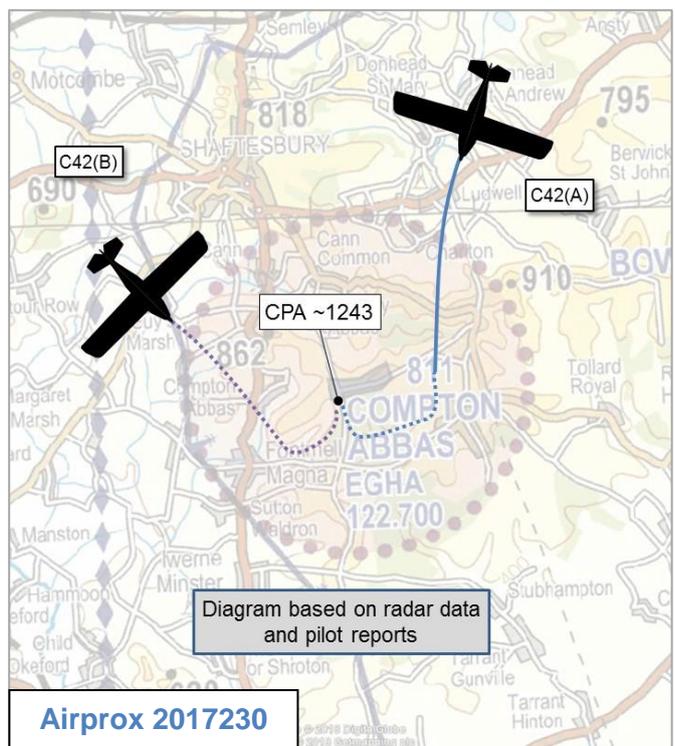
Of perhaps more concern, 7 incidents variously involved pilots either flying too close to other aircraft (including 2 deliberate interceptions by other pilots); flying over, or too close to, glider and microlight sites; and inaction on detecting or being told about an impending conflict. All of these incidents could probably have been avoided with just a little more thought and/or defensive flying by those involved.

The current key indicators of safety barrier performance for the 128 aircraft-to-aircraft incidents assessed so far for 2017 are shown below. The figures have now stabilised and fluctuate only by 1 or 2% in most cases.



My **Airprox of the month** involved two **C42 Ikarus** aircraft that came into proximity at Compton Abbas as they were both joining for the runway 26RH circuit (**Airprox 2017230: Category C**). One of the pilots was a visiting pilot who decided to join through the standard overhead join (C42(A)). He had heard the other C42 pilot also joining but thought that they were behind him. For his part, the second locally-based C42 pilot (C42(B)), had called that he was joining from the north and intending to descend deadside. The second pilot didn't hear the transmissions of the first and so was not aware that the visiting C42 was there, and the visiting C42 pilot misinterpreted the second pilot's call to think he was also conducting an overhead join. As can be seen from the diagram, the geometry was very much different, and the incident brings a couple of points to mind. Firstly, the need to be absolute clear in intentions on the radio, we don't know what the second C42 pilot actually said, but including something in his call to indicate that he was descending deadside left-hand might have been worthwhile. The other thing to think about when in, or joining a circuit, is where potential

conflicts might be with other aircraft joining, especially if they are non-radio. We have seen Airprox in these situations before where pilots established in a visual circuit have been surprised when another aircraft has suddenly appeared with no apparent calls due to being radio-fail and/or with other emergencies. The conflict point here was at the crosswind leg where the two joins coincided and hence a location for extra-vigilant lookout. Other conflict points are at the start of the downwind leg where other pilots might be joining downwind, at base leg where others might be joining left- or right-base, and on final approach where others might be joining from a straight-



in approach. Fortunately, both pilots saw each other at about the same time in this incident, and the visiting pilot abandoned his join, climbed back into the overhead and re-joined from another overhead join. Full details of the incident can be found at www.airproxboard.org.uk in the 'Airprox Reports and Analysis' section within the appropriate year and then in the 'Individual Airprox reports' tab.