



# AIRPROX *Insight*

DIRECTOR UKAB'S MONTHLY UPDATE

February 2018



## AIRPROX OF THE MONTH

# Flights of the Ikarus(s)

Keith Wilson/SFB Photographic

### Many things can conspire to bring about conflicts in the circuit, and joins, unexpected or otherwise, bring their fair share

In this incident two C42 Ikarus aircraft were both joining for a right-hand circuit on runway 26 at Compton Abbas and one, a visiting pilot, had decided to make a standard overhead join. He had heard another C42 pilot also joining but believed it was behind him.

The pilot of the second aircraft, a locally-based C42, had actually called that he was joining from the north and intending to descend deadside. The pilot didn't,

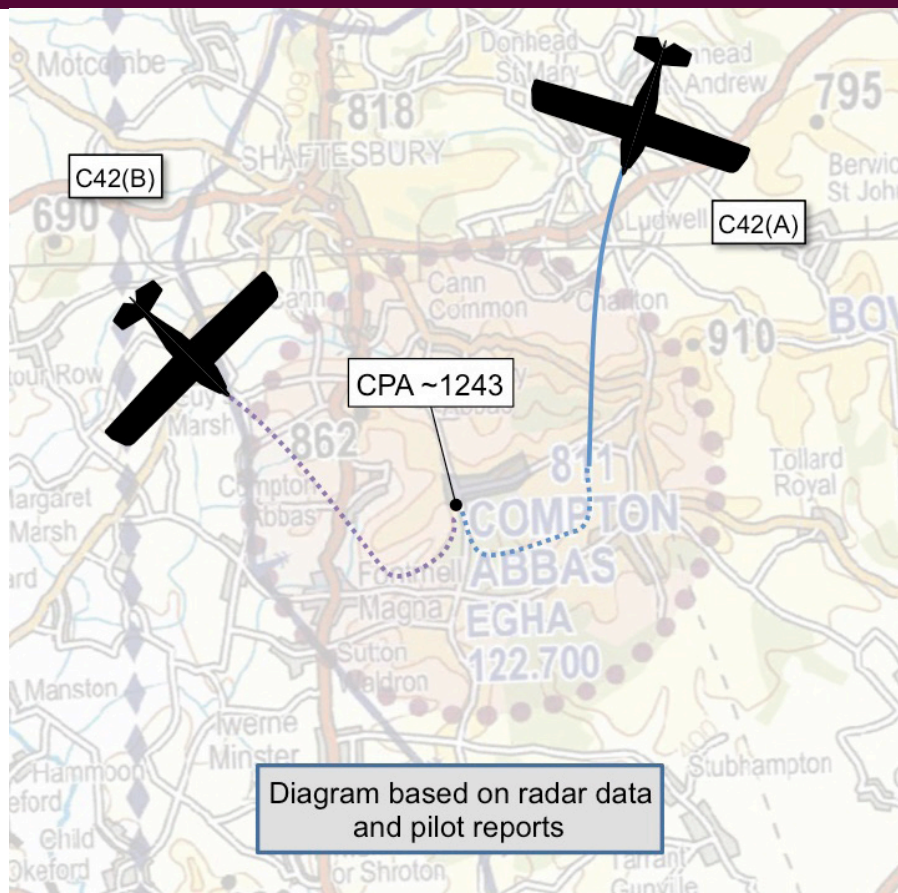
however, hear the transmissions of the first aircraft (A in the diagram) so was not aware that the visiting C42 was there, and the visiting C42 pilot misinterpreted the second pilot's call thinking he was also conducting an overhead join.

As you can see from the image (right) the geometry was very different to what the pilots believed, and this incident brings a couple of points to mind. First, the need to be absolutely clear in intentions on

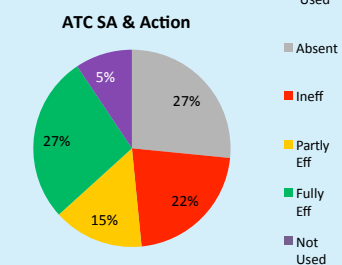
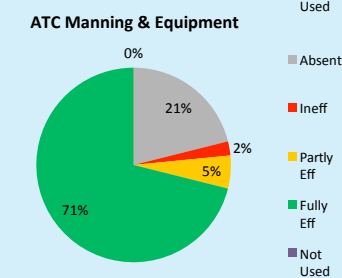
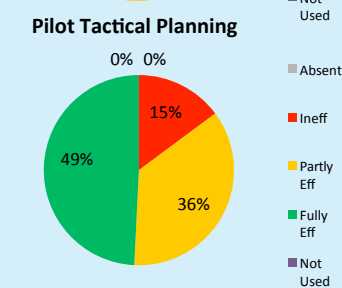
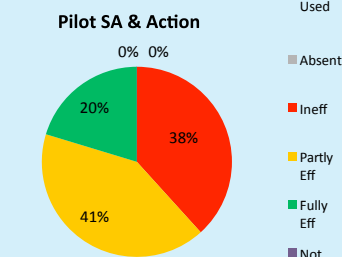
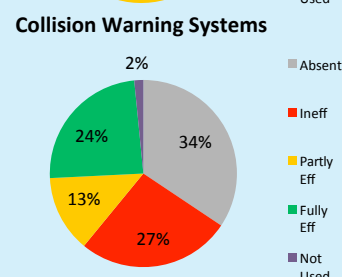
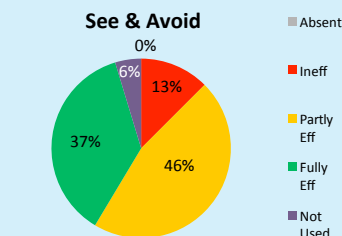
the radio; while we don't know what the second C42 pilot actually said, including something in a call to indicate descending deadside left-hand would be worthwhile.

The other thing to think about when in, or joining a circuit, is where potential conflicts might be with other joining aircraft, especially if they are non-radio.

There have been Airprox in these situations before where pilots established in a visual circuit have been surprised



Current key indicators of safety barrier performance for the 128 aircraft-to-aircraft incidents assessed so far for 2017 are shown below.



when another aircraft has suddenly appeared with no apparent calls due to radio failure and/or other emergencies.

The conflict point in this Category C incident at Compton Abbas was at the crosswind leg where the two joins coincided, which highlights a point 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 arriving from a straight-in approach.

Fortunately, both pilots in this case saw each other at about the same time and the visiting pilot abandoned his join, climbed back into the overhead and re-joined from there. Full details of the incident **Airprox 2017230** can be found at [airproxboard.org.uk](http://airproxboard.org.uk) in the 'Airprox Reports and Analysis' section within the appropriate year and then in the 'Individual Airprox reports' tab. ■

**UKAB MONTHLY ROUND-UP**

During the January 2018 meeting the Airprox Board assessed 26 incidents, 19 of which were aircraft-to-aircraft, with 11 assessed as having a definite risk of collision. There was one in the most serious Category A in which providence played a major role in the outcome, and

ten Category B where safety was much reduced due to serendipity, misjudgement, inaction, or late sighting.

The predominant theme was flawed situational awareness (including poor planning and not following procedures) which was evident in nine incidents. Some of these 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 five 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, seven incidents variously involved pilots either flying too close to other aircraft (including two 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 could probably have been avoided with a little more thought and/or defensive flying by those involved.

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