



AIR PROX *Insight*

DIRECTOR UKAB'S MONTHLY UPDATE

August 2018

AIRPROX OF THE MONTH

Over the top

PHOTO BY TERRY JOYCE

So, you're flying above the top of an ATZ no problem – not necessarily...

A PA-28 was joining overhead at Earls Colne (above) when a Robin DR400 appeared flying in the opposite direction just at the top-height of the ATZ. Although the DR400 pilot was nominally 75ft above the ATZ, this didn't give much of a margin against other airspace users who might have been operating at Earls Colne.

Furthermore, in consideration of others who might be operating at the airfield, the Board felt that the Robin pilot would have been much better served by monitoring the Earls Colne frequency as he flew over the top rather than opting for a Basic Service with Farnborough.

It's even better to fly with a height margin of 500ft or so above any ATZ, even if you are talking to the airfield – you never know who might be conducting a radio-out overhead join that you might not be

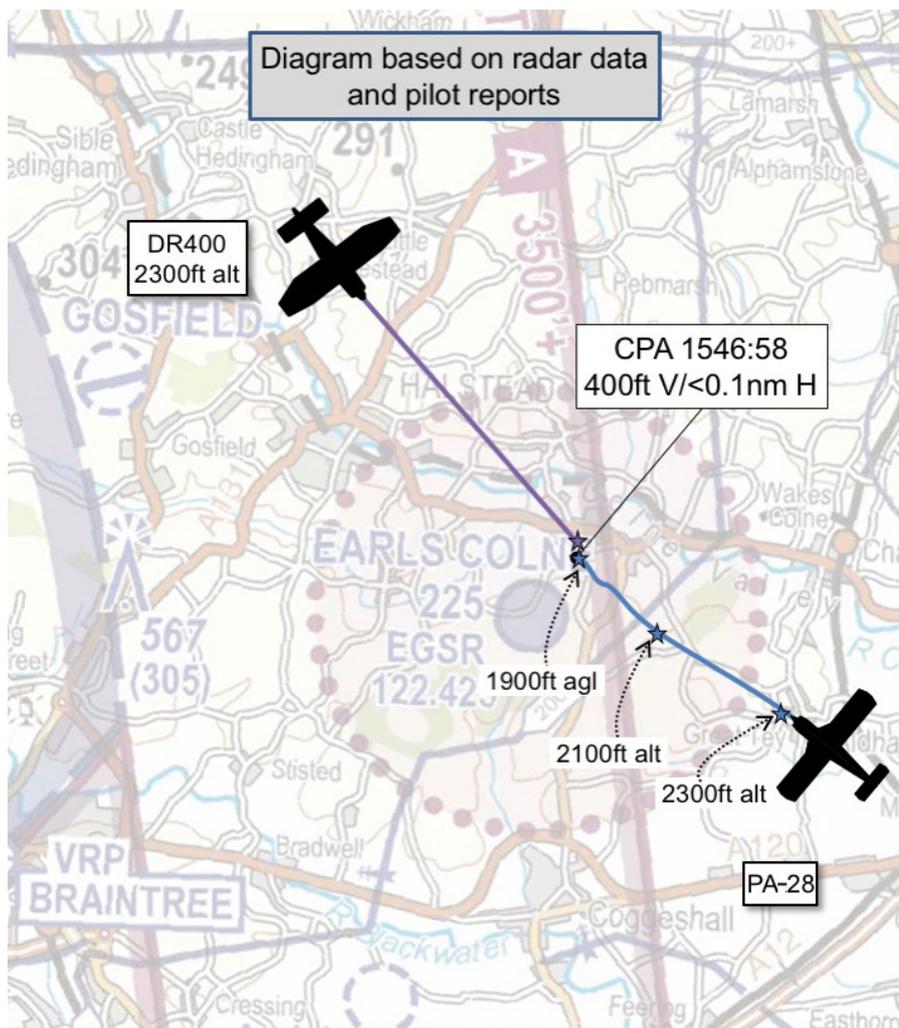
aware of. The Robin pilot's expectations of the level of service he might receive under a Basic Service also seemed to be overly optimistic. Remember that a Basic Service does not guarantee any form of traffic information, and neither will you be able to assimilate any information yourself from the radio calls of other pilots unless they happen to be using the same frequency.

Clearly, those operating at Earls Colne in this case would not be on Farnborough's frequency, and so the Robin pilot would not be likely to get any useful situational awareness of what they were doing. More specifically, if you want traffic information then ask for a Traffic Service, otherwise the controller you're talking to may not even be monitoring your aircraft track on the radar if they are busy. This prompted a recommendation for the CAA to re-emphasise what pilots will and won't get in

terms of service under a Basic Service – but don't wait for them to do so, have a look at [CAP 774](#) or the shorter [CAP 1434](#) and refresh yourself! There's a short version of the details in the box on the far right.

Finally, the Robin pilot also seemed to be operating on the assumption that other aircraft he saw would give way if he was on their right. Although this is of course technically the case, always assume the other pilot hasn't seen you even if they are notionally required to give way – they won't give way to something they haven't seen, and we all know that even those with the sharpest lookout can miss things if they aren't looking in the right place at the right time.

Full details of this incident (**Airprox 2018064**) can be found at airproxboard.org.uk in the 'Airprox Reports and Analysis' section within the appropriate year and then in the 'Individual Airprox reports' tab.



Farm strip near Royston. He wasn't aware of the strip and was concerned when a landing aircraft came close by — another timely reminder about drones and their integration with other aircraft, especially now that drone regulations and rules have recently changed. ■

Airprox Recommendations

2018020 A NOTAM is issued to remind airspace users of the advantage of contacting Waddington LARS when operating in the vicinity of EG R313.

2018064 The CAA re-emphasise the provisions of a Basic Service.

2018069 Drone Assist should display all minor airfields more obviously.

2018069 The CAA re-emphasise that commercial drone operators are required to have access to a current VFR chart before commencing operations.

BASIC SERVICE

This is intended to offer the pilot maximum autonomy and is available to IFR flights in Class G airspace, or VFR flights in Class E and Class G airspace. If the ATCO or FISO are aware of airspace activity that may affect your flight they will tell you; however, this is subject to their workload and the avoidance of other traffic is solely the pilot's responsibility. Maintain a good lookout.

TRAFFIC SERVICE

Under a Traffic Service, an ATCO will use radar to provide you with detailed traffic information on specific conflicting aircraft; they will not provide you with deconfliction advice, regardless of your meteorological conditions and the avoidance of any other traffic, whether called to you or not, still remains solely the pilot's responsibility.

UKAB MONTHLY ROUND-UP

During its July meeting the Airprox Board assessed 29 incidents, of which 16 were aircraft-to-aircraft, with six having a definite risk of collision (two were Category A where providence played a major part, and four were Category B where safety was much reduced as a result of serendipity, misjudgement, inaction, or late sighting).

The dominant themes concerned inaction or poor integration/turning towards a threat in six incidents; poor tactical planning and/or awareness of Notams/weather in another five, while lack of communication with ATC or sub-optimal controller liaison were responsible for five more.

There were five instances of late- or non-sightings, and four where a more appropriate air traffic service would have been advantageous or where the Board suspected that the pilot had false expectations as to the level of service he was receiving.

There was also a mixed bag of other factors including a level bust, a read-back failure, pilot distraction, poor interpretation

of TCAS, lack of courtesy to others and lack of traffic information under a Traffic Service.

The Board made four recommendations: the first stemmed from an incident where the Red Arrows spilled out of their restricted airspace (R313) at Scampton at an early stage in their work-up and came across a Cessna 152 flying close to the airspace but not talking to Waddington LARS.

Because Waddington radar was under maintenance, the controller was operating at Cranwell with associated degraded base-height coverage and so the Cessna only appeared as intermittent pop-up traffic at the last moment.

Although it was entitled to operate there without calling ATC, a simple call when flying in busy airspace or close to potential threat areas would at least give ATC some situational awareness that they could then pass on to others, even if you don't want any help yourself.

Two recommendations came out of one incident involving a commercial drone operator flying his craft close to Top

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