



# AIRPROX *Insight*

DIRECTOR UKAB'S MONTHLY UPDATE

July 2019



AIRPROX OF THE MONTH

## Approaching trouble

Good communication and taking early action is a benefit to everyone

PHOTO: Shutterstock (for illustrative purposes only).

**A** Falcon 2000 pilot receiving a Traffic Service from Bournemouth was positioning for an ILS approach to the airport, but while descending through 4000ft on the extended centreline at about 11nm a Mooney M20 was crossing the centreline from his right (**Airprox 2019036**).

The controller gave the Falcon pilot Traffic Information in good time, although arguably incomplete regarding the converging geometry. The Falcon pilot was aware of the Mooney and was required to give way to it. However, the pilot continued on track until a TCAS resolution advisory caused him to descend for avoidance.

The Mooney pilot was listening out with

Solent Radar (without their Listening Squawk selected) when it would have been better to have selected Bournemouth and their Listening Squawk; had he done so then, when the Bournemouth controller made a blind call to him, he might have been able to either reassure all that he had the Falcon in sight, or agree to avoid it by routing behind.

The Falcon pilot was given Traffic Information at 5nm and 1nm and had heard the Traffic Information being passed in-the-blind to the Mooney pilot, all of which the Board thought was sufficient information for him to take action. Some members wondered whether there had been an assumption that the Falcon, operating

under IFR and self-positioning for the ILS, had 'right of way' in some way when they did not – the collision avoidance rules of the air apply irrespective of flight rules, weather conditions or procedures being flown.

As it was, the Falcon pilot only saw the Mooney at a late stage (during the TCAS resolution advisory), but the Mooney pilot had seen the Falcon well before and was content that he had sufficient vertical separation.

This case also highlights the need to think of others flying aircraft that might be TCAS-equipped; although you might have sufficient vertical separation for VFR purposes, if a commercial pilot receives

a TCAS resolution advisory from your closing SSR they are mandated to react and manoeuvre. Out of courtesy if nothing else, try to ensure a wide berth, or at least point your vector well behind such aircraft to prevent unnecessary reactions.

Full details of the incidents can be found at the links within this note or 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

Some 31 Airprox, were reviewed during the Board's meeting — Of the 19 manned aircraft-to-aircraft incidents, seven were assessed as risk-bearing with two Category A (where separation was reduced to the bare minimum and only stopped short of an actual collision because providence played a major part in events), and five were Category B (where safety margins were much reduced below the norm through either chance, misjudgement or inaction; or where emergency avoiding action was only taken at the last minute).

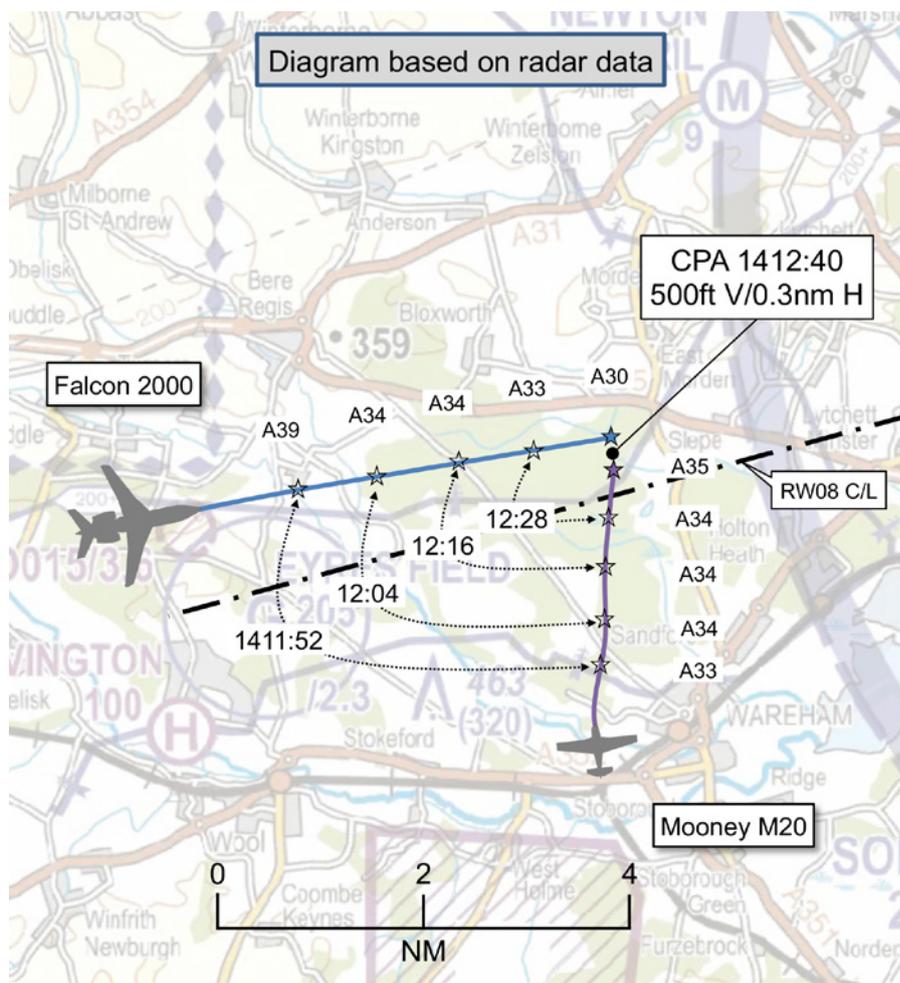
Overall, in June this year's increased reporting rates continue, with overall numbers remaining above the five-year average for both aircraft-to-aircraft and SUAS incidents (of which there were 12).

The predominant theme was late-/non-sighting (11 cases) which, in the absence of other available barriers, highlights once again the fragility of see-and-avoid as a safety barrier and the need therefore for robust lookout at all times as the back-stop for collision avoidance in Class G airspace.

Inaction by pilots featured in six Airprox, within which there were two instances of pilots not integrating properly with other aircraft which they had been informed were present in the visual circuit.

Inaction and failure to integrate are becoming too regular in visual circuit Airprox, with pilots pressing on when self-preservation at least should cause them to give way or go around even if the other aircraft should technically give way to them. The Board has warned many times before about the perils of assuming that the other pilot has situational awareness or has seen your aircraft; if for whatever reason they haven't become aware then they clearly won't avoid.

Other themes this month included four cases where pilots could have selected better ATS options both to gain situational awareness from ATC and also provide ATC



with valuable information about their own intentions. There were also four instances of sub-optimal controller performance, (some more clear-cut than others, and some simply down to an interpretation of 'controllership').

Even when controllers have satisfied their legal requirements, more could perhaps be done sometimes to assist pilots with their collision avoidance responsibilities. This is always a difficult discussion during Board meetings because of the desire not to blur the provision of services; however, aviation safety is rarely black-and-white in its circumstances and so sometimes a timely intervention over-and-above that which is formally required can assist the pilots in the grey areas.

The remaining incidents were a mixed-bag of poor communication of intentions, sighting reports, no SSR or incompatible Traffic Alerting Systems (TAS), and mentoring oversights.

Picking up on one of these issues, we still see too many aircraft not displaying SSR in all modes (contrary to the requirements of SERA.13001). If SSR is fitted and functional it should be selected on with all modes (gliders

excepted of course if battery considerations are an issue). With many pilots taking advantage of increasingly affordable TAS equipment, those who do not select SSR are often denying themselves a safety barrier even if their own aircraft doesn't have a TAS fitted.

The Board made one recommendation during the June meeting. This related to a Partenavia P68 conducting a survey consisting of multiple reciprocal passes at 2100ft. Although the pilot did see the other aircraft, a Beech Bonanza (albeit later than desirable), the Board felt that the company involved ought to consider equipping its aircraft with a TAS given the frequency of its survey tasks and the concomitant risk of task-focus to the detriment of lookout.

#### 2019028

The P68 operating company consider the incorporation of a TAS. ■

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