



AIRPROX *Insight*

DIRECTOR UKAB'S MONTHLY UPDATE

October 2018



AIRPROX OF THE MONTH

Whose right is it anyway?

**Who should give way – aircraft joining straight-in or those in the circuit?
The answer isn't straight-forward and hinges on who calls finals first**

Take this situation at Tatenhill where a Piper Cherokee Six was turning base from downwind while a PA-28 was conducting a straight-in join and they came into conflict on finals ([Airprox 2018092](#)).

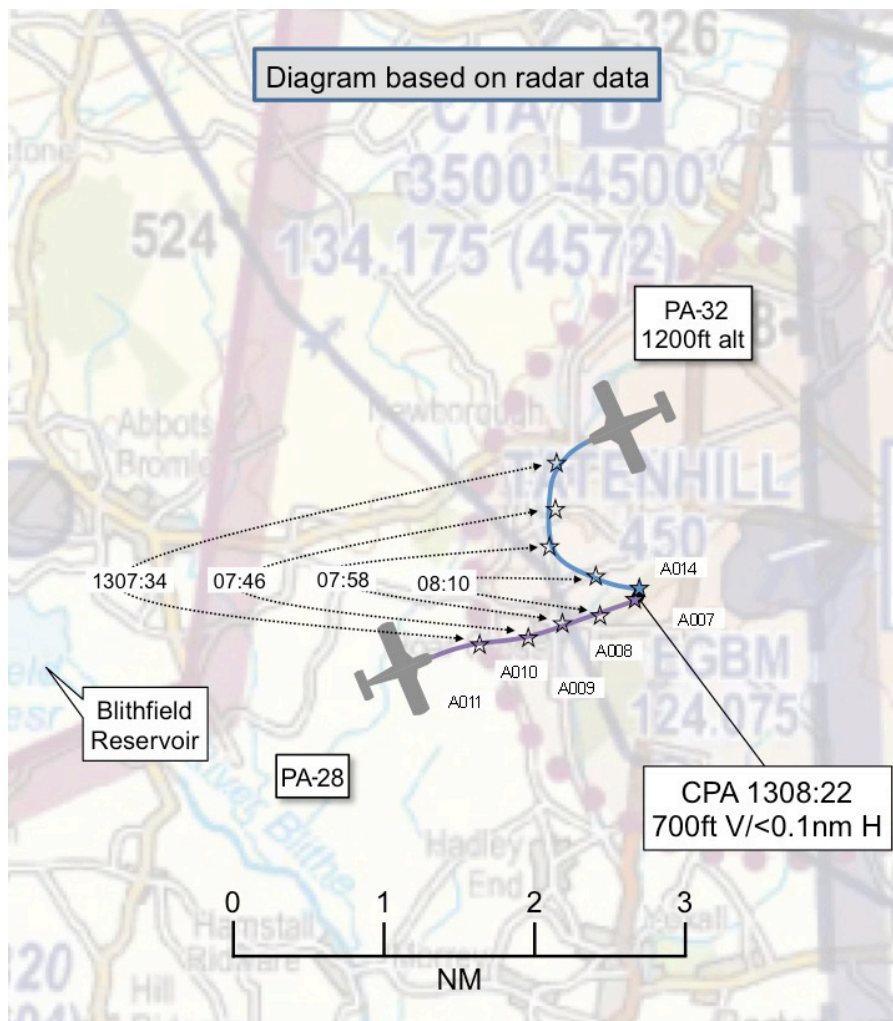
Although there could be no firm conclusions about who called first on the

radio due to a lack of R/T recordings, the situation worsened as both pilots continued on believing that the other would either be behind them or give way.

On the one hand the PA-28 pilot was required to conform with the traffic already in the visual circuit, one of which was the Cherokee, but on the other hand

the Cherokee pilot was required to give way to traffic 'in the final stages of an approach to land', which included the PA-28 heading straight-in.

The Board agreed that, routinely, those joining straight-in should only do so if they can integrate effectively with those already in the visual circuit, and cautioned pilots



(the 80:20 rule - with 80% of the time looking out of the cockpit).

There were three incidents where inaction resulted in aircraft needlessly coming close to each other. One was a failure to give way, while in the other two instances pilots assumed the other had seen them and would give way which, given the eye's performance limitations, is an inappropriate assumption. ATS non-availability or sub-optimal application also featured in three other incidents, with controller workload being cited as contributory in two.

The Board made three recommendations:

Airprox 2018090 North Weald provide advice to pilots concerning the potential for conflict with the Stapleford visual circuit.

Airprox 2018092 Tatenhill update their AIP entry to remove ambiguity from the join procedure.

Airprox 2018101 D&D transmit on all transmitters and on 121.5MHz.

The first of these recommendations stemmed from an incident where a Diamond DA42 was conducting an asymmetric approach to Runway 02 at North Weald. This requires the aircraft to fly close to the Stapleford ATZ boundary to the South.

Stapleford was on Runway 03LH and a PA-28 was turning downwind just outside the ATZ (following the promulgated Stapleford circuit pattern). They came head-to-head and the DA42 pilot had to turn right, into the Stapleford ATZ, to avoid the Piper.

The Board commented that this seemed to be a built-in potential conflict point between the two airfield patterns and discussed whether Stapleford might be better off conducting RH circuits to Runway 03.

It also thought that the North Weald A/G operator might at least provide a warning about potential Stapleford visual circuit traffic to pilots intending to approach North Weald Runway 02 from long-finals.

The second recommendation resulted from the Tatenhill Airprox of the Month incident. Although not specifically germane to the incident, the Board noticed that Tatenhill's AIP joining procedures were somewhat ambiguous.

about assuming priority simply because they have called a straight-in approach.

Equally, if in the circuit and another pilot does join straight-in then it may be that they've done so for good reason so discretion may be the better part of valour — give them room and, if necessary, go around early and talk about it later over tea.

Full details of the incident 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.

UKAB MONTHLY ROUND-UP

During its September 2018 meeting the Board assessed 31 incidents — 18 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 in which safety was much reduced as a result of serendipity,

misjudgement, inaction, or late sighting).

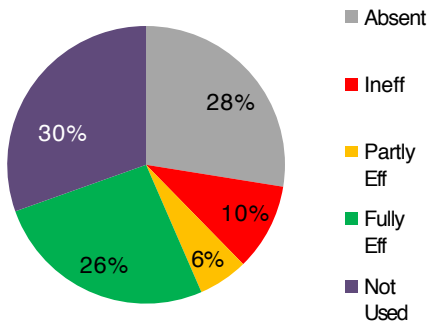
The number of aircraft-to-aircraft reports so far this year sits just above the expected five-year cumulative average at 146 but, at 112 incidents, drone/SUAS reports have now already reached 2017's levels with just over a quarter of the year still to go.

This month's incidents were mostly GA-biased, reflecting the fact that we are now processing Airprox from the summer months when GA flying increases. The two dominant themes were sub-optimal planning and integration with other aircraft (nine incidents), and seven occurrences of late- or non-sightings.

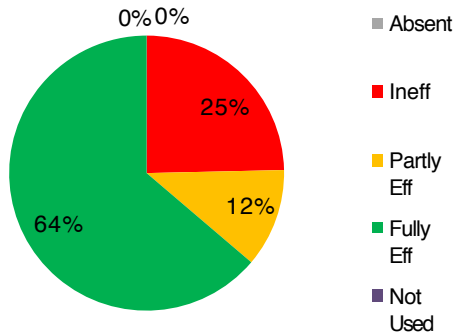
For the former, poor visual circuit planning and execution predominated, with pilots either not thinking ahead, not properly planning their integration, or not following circuit procedures. For the latter, an increase in late- and non-sightings is typical in the summer months as the airspace becomes busier and emphasises the need for pilots to prioritise a robust and effective lookout over in-cockpit tasks



ATC SA & Action



Pilot Regs, Processes, Procedures & Compliance

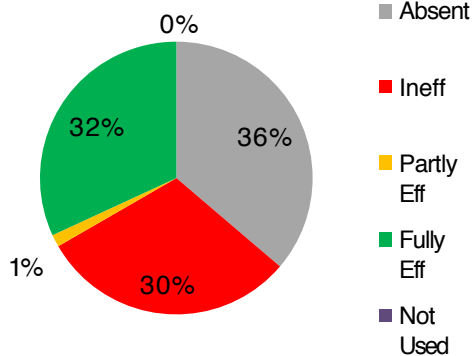
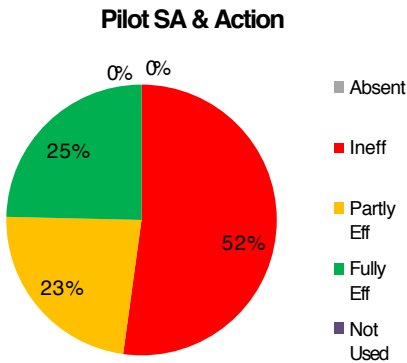


The final recommendation came out of an incident where a military aircraft unwittingly flew through a search and rescue temporary danger area because the crew was already at low-level and hadn't heard the promulgating transmission from Distress & Diversion.

The Board commented that D&D's procedure of only transmitting on antennas local to the TDA meant it was unlikely that aircraft at longer range would hear the transmission; it also commented that civil pilots would also be unaware because D&D only transmits details of TDAs on UHF Guard.

The latest 2018 performance graphs revealing the weakest and strongest safety barriers to Airprox (top) contain 69 incidents and the key barrier pie-charts are below. Although hopefully fairly self-explanatory, some interesting perspectives can be drawn in that:

Collision Warning Systems

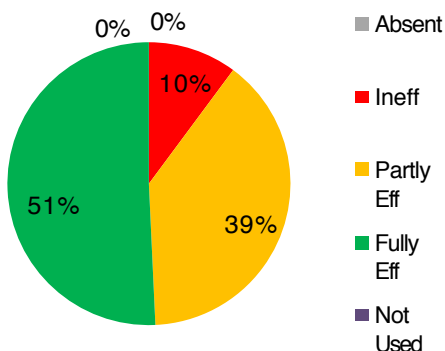


- *See-and-avoid was either ineffective or only partially effective in 54% of incidents.*
- *Collision warning systems were either absent or ineffective (mostly due to incompatibility) in 66% of incidents.*
- *Pilot situational awareness and subsequent action regarding the other aircraft was either ineffective or only partially effective in 75% of incidents.*
- *When present and used, ATC situational awareness and action was effective in about 62% of involved incidents: it was not present in 28%, and not used (mostly due to an inappropriate service being requested) in 30%.*

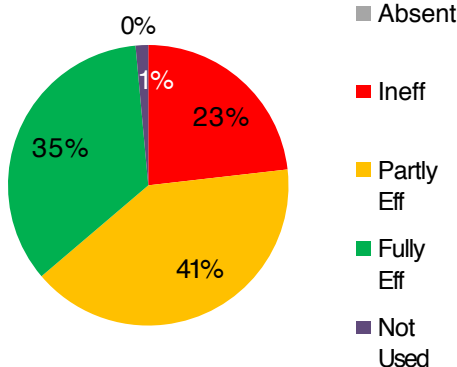
The stand-out item for me is the use, or not, of collision warning systems. Increasingly affordable systems are now available, and for about the price of a couple of tanks of fuel some hugely valuable situational awareness can be gained from them about other aircraft in the area.

While they're not infallible and can only function if suitably compatible systems (i.e. secondary surveillance radar) are detected, they might just make the difference when all other barriers are not performing well. ■

Pilot Tactical Planning



See & Avoid



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