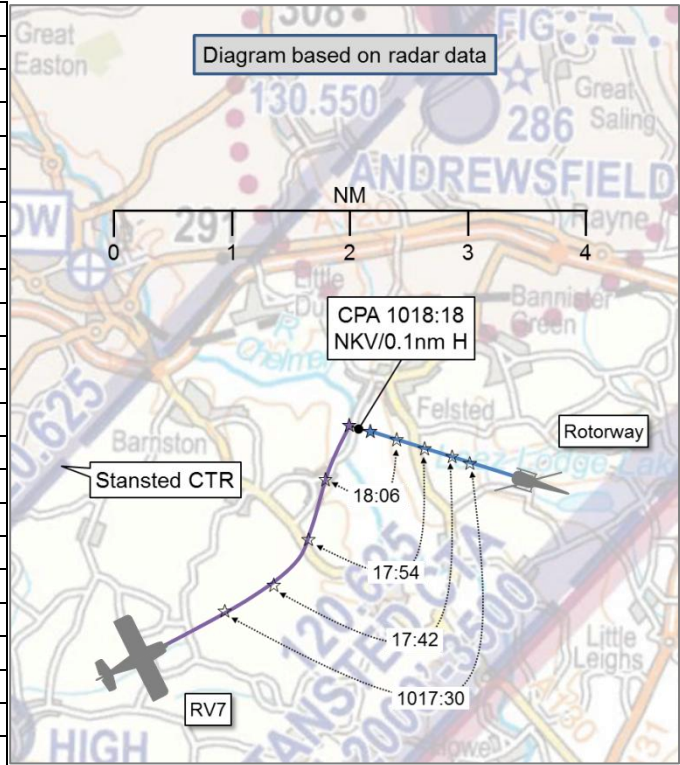


AIRPROX REPORT No 2015063

Date: 2 May 2015 Time: 1018Z Position: 5151N 00026E Location: 7.5nm ESE Stansted (Saturday)

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

| Recorded | Aircraft 1 | Aircraft 2 |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Aircraft | Rotorway 162 | Vans RV7 |
| Operator | Civ Pte | Civ Pte |
| Airspace | London FIR | London FIR |
| Class | G | G |
| Rules | VFR | VFR |
| Service | Basic | None |
| Provider | Essex Radar | N/A |
| Altitude/FL | No Mode C | No Mode C |
| Transponder | A | A, S |
| Reported | | |
| Colours | Yellow/black | Yellow |
| Lighting | Nav, strobe | Strobe |
| Conditions | VMC | VMC |
| Visibility | 25km | >10nm |
| Altitude/FL | 1250ft | ~1500ft |
| Altimeter | NK (1012hPa) | QNH (NK hPa) |
| Heading | 330° | 030° |
| Speed | 80kt | 150kt |
| ACAS/TAS | Not fitted | Not fitted |
| Separation | | |
| Reported | 0ft V/50ft H | Not Seen |
| Recorded | NK V/0.1nm H | |



THE ROTORWAY PILOT reports transiting to a private site 2nm southeast of Stansted Airport. He was about to enter the CTR when a yellow, low-wing, single-engine aircraft passed in front of him from left to right, co-altitude and at a distance of about 50ft. The pilot stated that he did not have time to react to the other aircraft's presence.



Not the subject Rotorway

He assessed the risk of collision as 'High'.

THE RV7 PILOT reports transiting to Andrewsfield with 'Stansted on Box 2 and Andrewsfield on Box 1'. Neither he nor his passenger saw another aircraft in close proximity.

Factual Background

The weather at Stansted was recorded as follows:

METAR EGSS 021020 12012KT 9999 SCT021 09/04 Q1011

Analysis and Investigation

CAA ATSI

The helicopter pilot was in receipt of a Basic Service from Essex Radar. At 1016:20, he was issued a clearance to transit the Stansted CTR not above 1500ft VFR. Initially the routing was

under the Stansted CTA in Class G airspace, which is where the Airprox occurred. The RV7 pilot had called Essex radar at 1013:00, and was asked to standby and remain outside controlled airspace. No service was provided to him. The RT traffic loading throughout this period was high as the controller was engaged in providing Approach Radar Services to Stansted as well as accommodating various transit aircraft and other joining aircraft. There was no mention of the occurrence on RT at the time. Under a Basic Service pilots are ultimately responsible for the provision of collision avoidance and controllers are not expected to monitor individual flights¹.

UKAB Secretariat

The Rotorway and RV7 pilots shared an equal responsibility for collision avoidance and not to operate in such proximity to other aircraft as to create a collision hazard². The incident geometry was converging and the RV7 pilot was required to give way to the Rotorway³.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a Rotorway and an RV7 flew into proximity at 1018 on Saturday 2nd May 2015. Both pilots were operating under VFR in VMC, the Rotorway pilot in receipt of a Basic Service from Essex Radar, and the RV7 pilot not in receipt of an Air Traffic Service.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from the pilots of both aircraft, radar photographs/video recordings and a report from the appropriate ATC authority.

The Board first considered the pilots' actions. Members were given further information on the Rotorway pilot from one of the members who had spoken to him about the incident. He frequently flew this transit route and, on this occasion, had been looking to his right to gain visual contact with a Police helicopter whose position he had gleaned from RT traffic. The RV7 then passed in front of him with 'no time to react'. As for the RV7 pilot, he had already called Essex Radar but was not able to obtain a Service due to controller workload. He was approaching his destination, and had selected both Stansted (Essex Radar) and Andrewsfield RT frequencies on his two radios. He reported that neither he nor his passenger, with a combined total of many thousands of flying hours, saw the helicopter. The Board noted that the Essex Radar controller was operating under a high workload and was not able to provide Traffic Information to the pilots, who were on converging tracks.

Members wondered whether the attention of the RV7 pilot and his passenger had been directed at identifying Andrewsfield to the detriment of their general lookout, and agreed that the lack of visual sighting by both pilots of the other aircraft underlined both the frailty of human perception, and the overriding need to counter this by maintaining an effective lookout. Ultimately, members agreed that the Airprox had been caused both by the non-sighting by the RV7 pilot and, because his sighting was too late to allow effective avoiding action, the effective non-sighting by the Rotorway pilot. The Board emphasised that this assessment was not in criticism of the pilots but simply a statement of fact which underlined the importance of effective lookout, especially in Class G airspace. In assessing the risk of collision, the Board agreed that the unfortunate combination of a lack of Air Traffic Service, the limited provisions of a Basic Service, and both pilots' lookout probably being directed away from the respective conflicting traffic, resulted in all barriers to mid-air collision, other than chance, being removed; the situation had only just stopped short of an actual collision.

In the course of the discussion, members also noted that the RV7 pilot had not selected Mode C SSR. They re-iterated that selection of Mode C was an important factor in flight safety, both as an awareness tool for ATC for potential conflict avoidance, and to allow other aircrafts' TCAS or TAS to

¹ CAP774, paragraph 2.1.

² SERA.3205 Proximity.

³ SERA.3210 Right-of-way (c) (2) Converging.

operate effectively if they were so fitted. As a result, members strongly encouraged all pilots routinely to select Mode C on.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: A non-sighting by the RV7 pilot and effectively a non-sighting by the Rotorway pilot.

Degree of Risk: A.