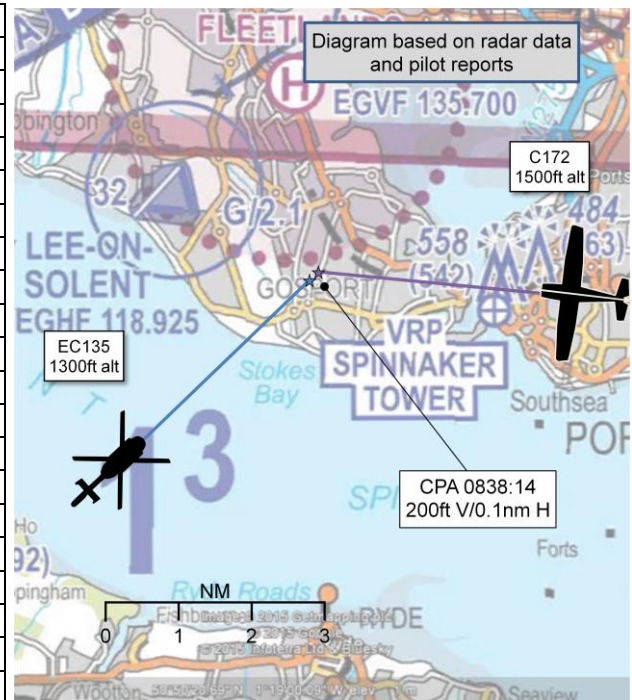


AIRPROX REPORT No 2015105

Date: 10 Jul 2015 Time: 0838Z Position: 5048N 0011W Location: Gosport

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	EC135	Cessna 172
Operator	HEMS	Civ Club
Airspace	FIR	FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	Basic	Basic
Provider	Solent	Solent
Altitude/FL	1300ft	1500ft
Transponder	A, C, S	A,C
Reported		
Colours	Red/Yellow	White
Lighting	HISL, Landing	HISL
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	30km	50km
Altitude/FL	1300ft	1500ft
Altimeter	QNH (1022hPa)	NK
Heading	040°	270°
Speed	120kt	110kt
ACAS/TAS	Not fitted	TAS
Alert	N/A	None
Separation		
Reported	100ft V/200m H	~150ft V/~200m H
Recorded	200ft V/0.1nm H	



THE EC135 PILOT reports on a CAT A Helimed task from the Isle of Wight to Portsmouth. He was under a Basic Service from Solent Radar and had informed Lee Radio of his intentions. He was aware of fixed-wing traffic in the vicinity of the Spinnaker Tower and briefed the crew to look out. On coasting-in, he noticed a Cessna 172 at about 100ft above at 200m range. He took avoiding action by turning right and descending and the Cessna passed safely down the left-hand side, but did not appear to deviate from its original track. He immediately asked Solent whether they had details of the conflicting traffic, which they did and on landing he telephoned Solent Radar to discuss the Airprox with the Watch Manager.

He assessed the risk of collision as 'High'.

THE CESSNA172 PILOT reports proceeding westbound north of the coastline. Cockpit workload was low and he glanced down at his chart, when he looked up he observed a helicopter in his ten o'clock position, below his altitude, possibly proceeding on a north-easterly track. The helicopter was already in a right-turn and passed down his port side so he perceived that no avoiding action was necessary. He then heard a discussion between the helicopter pilot and ATC and realised they were discussing his aircraft.

He assessed the risk of collision as 'Medium'.

THE SOLENT CONTROLLER reports providing both aircraft with a Basic Service. The EC135 pilot reported a Cessna 172 passing him and requested the details. The pilot later phoned the Watch Manager and reported that the other aircraft got very close to him. He was informed that he was on a Basic Service and whilst they endeavour to provide relevant Traffic Information, it does depend on controller workload. In this instance, it was very busy with a controller under training, no assistant and the co-ordinator had only just been able to return to position because of manning requirements.

Factual Background

The Southampton weather at the time was:

METAR EGHI 100820Z 15006KT 110V190 9999 FEW020 17/08 Q1022

Analysis and Investigation

CAA ATSI

ATSI had access to both pilots reports, the Swanwick radar recording and recordings of the Solent radar (Southampton) and Fleetlands radio.

- At 0834:12 the pilot of the EC135 established communication with Solent Radar and a Basic Service was agreed. The aircraft had just left the Isle of Wight and was tracking northbound towards a Portsmouth hospital at 1300ft.
- At 0836:32 the pilot of the C172 established communication with Solent Radar, as he reported passing the Spinnaker Tower at Portsmouth. A Basic Service was agreed as the aircraft tracked westbound at 1500ft.
- At 0838:15 CPA occurred (Figure 1).

No traffic information was passed to either aircraft.

The Solent Radar controller was under training, there was no radar assistant available and the workload was considerable. Under a Basic Service a controller is not required to monitor a flight. Whether Traffic Information has been provided or not, the pilot remains responsible for collision avoidance without assistance from the controller.¹

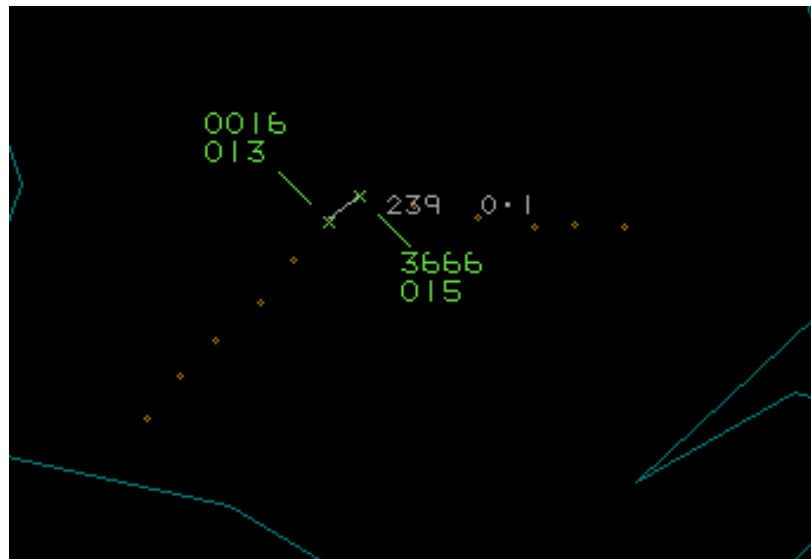


Figure 1 – CPA - Swanwick MRT at 0838:15

¹ CAP493 Section 1 Chapter 12 para 2E.5

UKAB Secretariat

The EC135 and Cessna 172 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 so the EC135 pilot was required to give way to the Cessna 172³.

Summary

An Airprox was filed when an EC135 and a Cessna 172 flew into proximity on 10th July 2015. Both aircraft were in receipt of a Basic Service from Solent Radar. And neither received Traffic Information. The EC135 pilot took avoiding action, but the Cessna pilot did not see the helicopter until after it had taken action.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from the pilots of both aircraft, transcripts of the relevant RT frequencies, radar photographs/video recordings, reports from the air traffic controllers involved and reports from the appropriate ATC and operating authorities.

The Board first considered the actions of the EC135 pilot. It appeared that he had good situational awareness and was monitoring various frequencies which had alerted him to traffic in the vicinity and he briefed the crew to keep a good look-out. However, it was noted that the helicopter did not have TCAS fitted, and the Board opined that this would have increased his situational awareness also. In the end, members noted that the EC135 pilot had seen the C172 fairly late, and had had to take avoiding action.

For his part, the Board noted that the C172 pilot had also seen the EC135 but had taken no avoiding action because he considered no action was necessary.

The Board commented on the TAS/TCAS elements of the incident wherein it was noted that the C172 had TAS fitted but it was not made clear if any alert was received or even if the unit was turned on. A helicopter member of the Board also stated that he was surprised that the EC135 was not fitted with TCAS, although he knew that work was undergoing to equip all HEMS aircraft.

It was pointed out to the Board that both aircraft involved were on a Basic Service provided by Solent Radar. The NATS member reported that the frequency was very busy at the time, and that the controller involved was under training, which would have both limited any ability to give Traffic Information to aircraft that had only requested a Basic Service.

In determining the cause, the Board quickly agreed that it was simply a late sighting by both pilots. Regarding the assessment of risk, the Board concurred that effective and timely action had been taken to prevent a collision and that this was a Category C incident.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: A late sighting by both pilots.

Degree of Risk: C.

² SERA.3205 Proximity.

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