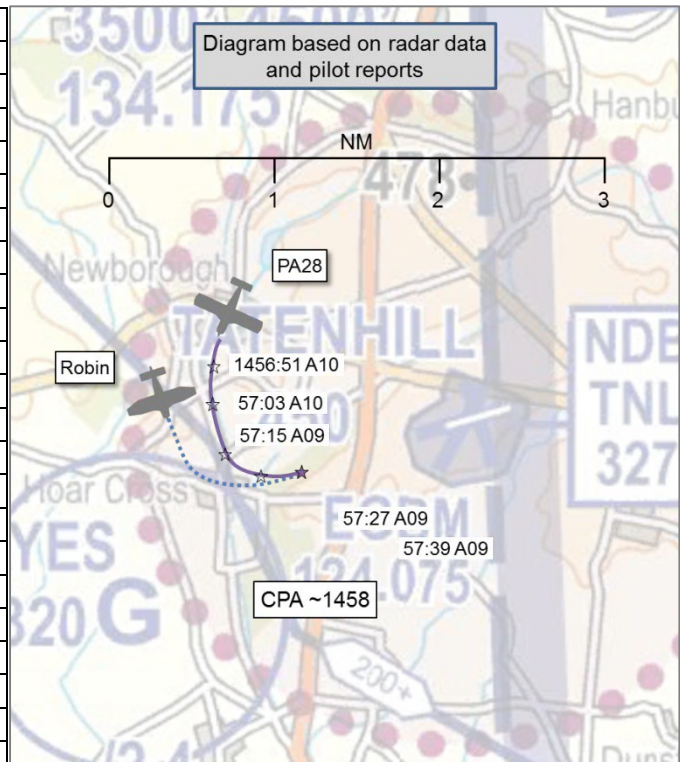


AIRPROX REPORT No 2015166

Date: 27 Sep 2015 Time: 1458Z Position: 5248N 00147W Location: Tatenhill

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	Robin	PA28
Operator	Civ Trg	Civ Pte
Airspace	Tatenhill ATZ	Tatenhill ATZ
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	AGCS	AGCS
Provider	Tatenhill Radio	Tatenhill Radio
Altitude/FL	NK	900ft
Transponder	Not observed	A, C, S
Reported		
Colours	White/red	White/blue
Lighting	Beacon	Strobes
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	20km	10km
Altitude/FL	450ft	1000ft
Altimeter	QFE (1021hPa)	QFE (1000hPa)
Heading	080°	180°
Speed	65kt	100kt
ACAS/TAS	Not fitted	Not fitted
Separation		
Reported	0ft V/10m H	NK V/1800ft H
Recorded	NK	



THE ROBIN PILOT reports conducting an instructional sortie. Having just established final for a touch and go, the pilot in an aircraft known to be behind¹ called base leg with ‘contact another aircraft on base inside of them’, this caused the Robin student and instructor to look to their left to see who and where that aircraft was. The aircraft was seen to the left in a descending left turn, above and behind by about 50ft. The Robin pilot altered heading to the right and initiated a go around and, as he applied power, the other aircraft quickly descended below. The Robin pilot manoeuvred to the right-hand side of the runway to watch the other aircraft continue on the approach.

He assessed the risk of collision as ‘High’.

THE PA28 PILOT reports joining the circuit from an overhead join, following 2 aircraft in the circuit. He had just completed his pre-landing checks when his seat-back broke and he fell backwards. Because he was holding on to the yoke, the aircraft pitched up and nearly stalled. He managed to recover the aircraft before it did so, with one hand on the instrument panel and one on the yoke. As he attempted to return the seat to an upright position, he lost sight of the other aircraft. The Robin had joined downwind behind the PA28 he thought and, as he turned onto base leg (by this time ‘late downwind’), he saw it at the same height, ‘1800ft away’ on his right. The PA28 pilot kept the Robin in sight until he turned onto final when he saw it on his right and closing fast. He assumed the Robin pilot hadn’t seen him and so he took avoiding action. The PA28 pilot noted that he had been flying into sun on the downwind leg. He also stated that the seat had failed on two previous occasions, once on take-off and once on landing, and that the failures had been noted in the ‘defects book’.

He assessed the risk of collision as ‘None’.

¹ The Robin pilot described in later correspondence that as he was tracking downwind he had been aware of the other aircraft descending deadside.

Factual Background

The weather at East Midlands was recorded as follows:

METAR EGNX 271450Z 11007KT 9999 SCT035 18/08 Q1035=
 METAR EGNX 271520Z 07006KT 9999 SCT035 17/08 Q1035=

Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

The Robin and PA28 pilots shared an equal responsibility for collision avoidance and not to operate in such proximity to other aircraft as to create a collision hazard². An aircraft operated on or in the vicinity of an aerodrome shall conform with or avoid the pattern of traffic formed by other aircraft in operation³ although an aircraft that is aware that another is compelled to land shall give way to that aircraft⁴.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a Robin and a PA28 flew into proximity at about 1458 on Sunday 27th September 2015. Both pilots were operating under VFR in VMC, both in receipt of an Air Ground Communication Service from Tatenhill.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted only of conflicting reports from both pilots. In the absence of any radar recordings, Board members were faced with trying to deduce the circumstances of the Airprox from these reports and, as a result, they discussed the reported geometry of the incident at length.

Eventually, it was agreed that the PA28 pilot's report seemed to be inconsistent in that, if the Robin had been behind him downwind, it would either have had to overtake him and/or cut inside and cross over to his right on base leg if it was then to appear 1800ft to the PA28 pilot's right-hand side as he himself turned base leg. More likely, they thought, was that the PA28 pilot's memory of the incident had become muddled by the frightening events downwind, and that he had most probably joined the circuit behind the Robin as described by the Robin pilot. Once downwind, the PA28 pilot had then been faced with the alarming and dangerous situation of his seat collapsing (and a near loss of control), and had likely lost track of the other aircraft in the circuit until he saw the Robin on his right-hand side on base leg. Understandably flustered by the incident downwind, it appeared to the Board that in his likely eagerness to land he had probably flown a smaller circuit than the Robin and thus into conflict on final.

Members agreed that the seat-back collapse justified declaring an emergency, and felt that if the PA28 pilot had done so, it would have afforded other pilots the information they required in order to make way for the PA28 pilot to land immediately. In the event, the PA28 pilot did not use the radio to convey his situation and so, ultimately, he was still required to integrate with the Robin ahead in the visual circuit. Although the CPA was not captured on radar, members were content from the pilots' descriptions that the incident had been risk bearing and that safety margins had been much reduced.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: The PA28 pilot did not integrate with the Robin in the visual circuit.

Degree of Risk: B.

² SERA.3205 Proximity.

³ SERA.3225 Operation on and in the Vicinity of an Aerodrome.

⁴ SERA.3210 Right-of-way.