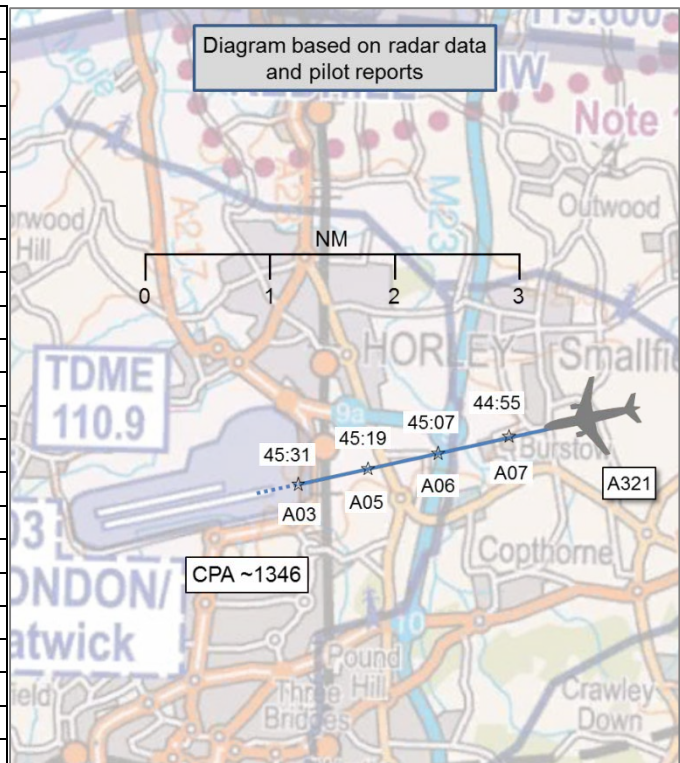


AIRPROX REPORT No 2015212

Date: 28 Nov 2015 Time: 1346Z Position: 5109N 00010W Location: Gatwick Airport

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	A321	Drone
Operator	CAT	Unknown
Airspace	Gatwick CTR	Gatwick CTR
Class	D	D
Rules	IFR	
Service	Aerodrome	
Provider	Gatwick	
Altitude/FL	NK	
Transponder	A, C, S	
Reported		Not reported
Colours	White/yellow	
Lighting	'All on'	
Conditions	VMC	
Visibility	10km	
Altitude/FL	20ft	
Altimeter	agl (1012hPa)	
Heading	259°	
Speed	139kt	
ACAS/TAS	TCAS II	
Alert	None	
Separation		
Reported	80ft V/0m H	
Recorded		NK



THE A321 PILOT reports conducting a normal ILS Approach to RW26L. The Captain was flying (PF) and the reporting pilot was pilot monitoring (PM). At 100ft agl he saw what he assumed was a bird hovering at about that height above the RW26L touchdown markers, on the centreline, which did not warrant mentioning. He kept watching, with increasing suspicion as the object remained in the same spot in the front cockpit window, hovering, entirely stationary, and not 'flapping', unlike a bird. At about 30ft agl, when just about to land, he realised it was a drone with a dark/black colour frame. He lost sight of the drone at 20ft agl and continued for a normal landing. He noted that there was not enough time to state or discuss the sighting with the PF at such a critical phase of flight.

He assessed the risk of collision as 'High'.

THE DRONE OPERATOR: The operator of the reported drone could not be traced.

GATWICK OPS DEPARTMENT confirmed that no permission had been requested to operate the drone and that the matter was reported to the Police. The A321 landed at 13:45:57 and subsequently reported what appeared to be a remotely piloted aircraft above the touchdown zone. The ATC Supervisor then telephoned Gatwick Police at 13.47:46 to ask if they were aware of any drone activity. They confirmed not. The Watch Manager then coordinated a perimeter check for any drone operators. At 13.52, the Police confirmed nothing in the vicinity of the undershoot.

Factual Background

The weather at Gatwick was recorded as follows:

METAR EGKK 281350Z 22008KT 9999 -SHRA FEW013 SCT023 BKN031 08/06 Q1012 RESHRA=

Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

The Air Navigation Order 2009 (as amended), Article 166, paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 state:

(2) The person in charge of a small unmanned aircraft may only fly the aircraft if reasonably satisfied that the flight can safely be made.

(3) The person in charge of a small unmanned aircraft must maintain direct, unaided visual contact with the aircraft sufficient to monitor its flight path in relation to other aircraft, persons, vehicles, vessels and structures for the purpose of avoiding collisions.'

(4) The person in charge of a small unmanned aircraft which has a mass of more than 7kg excluding its fuel but including any articles or equipment installed in or attached to the aircraft at the commencement of its flight, must not fly the aircraft

(a) in Class A, C, D or E airspace unless the permission of the appropriate air traffic control unit has been obtained;

(b) within an aerodrome traffic zone ...; or

(c) at a height of more than 400 feet above the surface unless it is flying in airspace described in sub-paragraph (a) or (b) and in accordance with the requirements for that airspace.'

A CAA web site¹ provides information and guidance associated with the operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UASs) and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs).

Additionally, the CAA has published a UAV Safety Notice² which states the responsibilities for flying unmanned aircraft. This includes:

'You are responsible for avoiding collisions with other people or objects - including aircraft.

Do not fly your unmanned aircraft in any way that could endanger people or property.

It is illegal to fly your unmanned aircraft over a congested area (streets, towns and cities).

..., stay well clear of airports and airfields'.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when an A321 and a drone flew into proximity at 1346 on Saturday 28th November 2015. The A321 pilot was operating under IFR in VMC, in receipt of an Aerodrome Control Service from Gatwick Tower.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of a report from the A321 pilot and radar photographs/video recordings (which did not indicate another return).

The Board quickly agreed that the drone was being operated in flagrant disregard of the regulations and without thought as to the serious consequences should an approaching aircraft either land slightly long or have to go-around at a late stage. Members expressed their deep disappointment at the actions of the individual responsible for this drone's operation, no doubt undertaken in order to secure head-on video footage of landing passenger airliners; they were incredulous at the behaviour that had been demonstrated in this incident. Although the offending drone operator could not be traced, it was hoped that he or she might hear of the Airprox report and perhaps consider the possible ramifications of their thoughtless actions.

The Board unanimously agreed that the drone was being operated illegally, that it was flown into conflict with the A321, and that, by hovering it at 100ft above the runway as the A321 landed, there was an actual risk of collision.

¹ www.caa.co.uk/uas

² CAP 1202

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: The drone was flown into conflict with the A321.

Degree of Risk: A.