

## **AIRPROX REPORT No 2013147**

**Date/Time:** 5 Oct 2013 1155Z (Saturday)

**Position:** 5035N 00409W  
(Brent Tor Glider Site  
- elevation 700ft)

**Airspace:** Lon FIR (Class: G)

**Aircraft 1** **Aircraft 2**

**Type:** ASK 13 F406

**Operator:** Civ Club Civ Comm

**Alt/FL:** 800ft 260ft  
QFE (NK hPa) Rad Alt

**Conditions:** VMC VMC

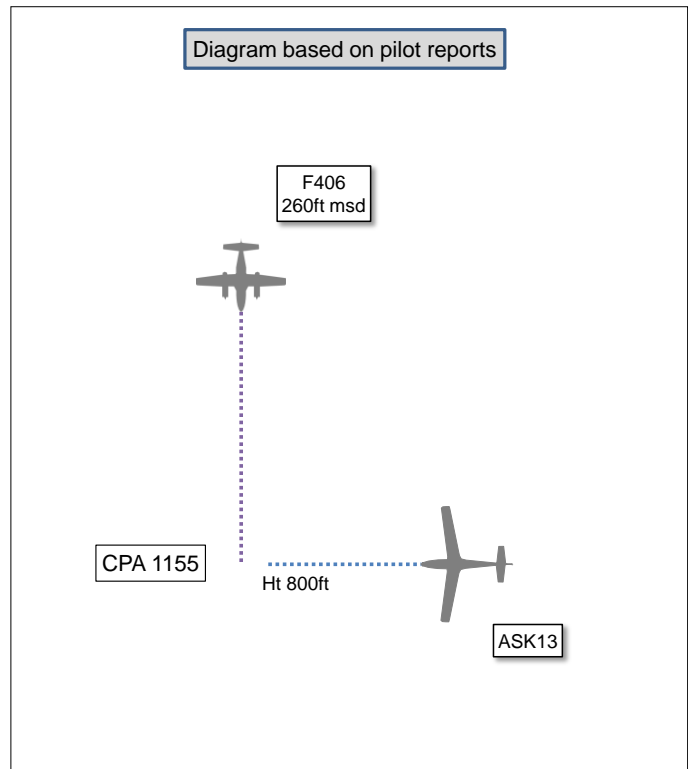
**Visibility:** >20km 10km

**Reported Separation:**

500ft V/500yd H NK

**Recorded Separation:**

NK



### **PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB**

**THE ASK13 PILOT** reports demonstrating a winch launch to a student pilot. The red and white glider was not fitted with lights, a radio, an SSR transponder, a TAS or an ACAS. The pilot was operating under VFR in VMC. Near the top of the winch launch, at 800ft and heading 270° at 60kt, he saw a white aircraft in level flight at very low altitude approaching 'from the right' at a range of 1km. He released the winch cable and watched the other aircraft cross ahead, no more than 500yd from the descending cable and 500ft below the glider.

He assessed the risk of collision with the cable as 'High'.

**THE F406 PILOT** reports conducting a low-level survey flight<sup>1</sup>. The white aircraft's lighting state was not reported. The SSR transponder was selected on, with Modes A and C. The TAS/ACAS fit was not reported. The pilot was operating under VFR in VMC, in receipt of a Basic Service from London Information. Heading 180° at 140kt and 260ft agl, he saw a glider 'in the Brentor airfield area', well above, and some 2nm away. He continued because he had good vertical separation and 'did not see any danger'. A little while later he was asked to contact Brentor airfield by his operating base ATC. He attempted to do so. He 'could not hear them properly' but ascertained that they had glider activities underway so he decided to move the survey task to the east in order to remain clear. The pilot noted that a contact frequency for Brentor airfield was not printed on the VFR map, and suggested that this would be a useful addition.



He did not make an assessment of the risk of collision.

<sup>1</sup> The aircraft operating company was working under the terms of an ACP and CAA exemption, both reproduced at Annex A. The survey task consisted of flying due north and south on GPS directed track lines, spaced 200m apart, between 260ft and 800ft msd.

## Factual Background

The weather at Exeter and Newquay was recorded as follows:

METAR EGTE 051150Z 33007KT 290V010 9999 SCT025 17/11 Q1022  
 METAR EGHQ 051150Z 28006KT 250V310 9999 FEW022 16/11 Q1023

Brentor Glider Site is listed in the UK AIP ENR 5.5-7, dated 19 Sep 2013, as follows:

BRENT TOR GLIDER SITE, NR TAVISTOCK, DEVON (W)  503517N 0040850W	Upper limit: 2000 ft	Phone: Dartmoor Gliding Club 01822-810712	<b>Site elevation:</b> 820 ft amsl.  Hours: HJ
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## Analysis and Investigation

### UKAB Secretariat

Both pilots shared equal responsibility for collision avoidance<sup>2</sup>, and the F406 pilot was required to give way to the ASK13 glider<sup>3</sup>. He was also required to remain clear of the airspace in which the pattern of traffic intending to land at Brent Tor airfield is formed<sup>4</sup>.

## Summary

An Airprox was reported when an F406 (conducting a survey task) and an ASK13 glider (which was winch-launching at Brentor Glider site) flew into proximity. Both pilots were operating under VFR in VMC. The F406 pilot was in receipt of a Basic Service from London Information, the ASK13 pilot was not in receipt of an ATS.

## **PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS**

Information available included reports from the pilots of both ac, radar video recordings and a verbal report from the air traffic controllers involved.

The Board first considered the ASK13 pilot's actions. He was operating under VFR in VMC from a promulgated and active glider site and was nearing the top of a winch launch. He saw the F406 at range and released his launch cable in order to prevent what he judged to be a developing unsafe situation. He did not make an assessment of his risk of colliding with the F406, but did state that he considered that there was a 'High' risk of the F406 colliding with the cable.

Concerning the F406 pilot, the Board noted that he had reported that he had seen 'a glider' at range but continued his flight path after assessing that there was 'no danger'. This assessment did not appear to include consideration of the potential presence of winch cables. The Board discussed the likely position of the F406 with regard to Brent Tor glider site but, in the absence of recorded data, were only able to conclude that the F406 pilot had flown in the vicinity of the glider site, which had caused the glider pilot concern, due to the proximity of the descending cable.

Members then went on to discuss the survey task being undertaken by the F406 pilot and commented on the large area of operation and its potential impact on other airspace users. It was noted that the ACN and CAA Permission were designed to manage the survey activity but it appeared that the ACN lacked clarity in places and had not been fully complied with. In particular, the ACN 'Coordination Arrangements' (paragraph 9a) stated that the F406 pilot should make a landline or RTF call to any airfield affected by the survey flight lines. This had not been done with Brent Tor airfield. The F406 pilot commented on the lack of RTF contact frequency for Brent Tor airfield on the VFR chart, which caused some members to question the pilot's knowledge of the

<sup>2</sup> Rules of the Air 2007 (as amended), Rule 8 (Avoiding aerial collisions).

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, Rule 9 (Converging).

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, Rule 12 (Flight in the vicinity of an aerodrome).

requirements of the ACN. The Board were informed that the ATCU of one of the F406's operating bases had, on their own initiative, proactively taken on the task of telephoning 'local' airfields to notify them of the impending survey activity because they were worried that the foreign F406 crew were not familiar with the local area or UK airspace. Members also opined that some of the requirements within the CAA Permission were not sufficiently practical. For example, the requirement at paragraph (d)(iv), to inform local police, did not specify exactly at what level to inform the police. The survey covered a large area of both sparse and dense population, with wide variations in police force 'locality'. Similarly, paragraph (d)(vi) required that a publicity programme be undertaken to inform local residents of the flights, but there was no mechanism in place to judge the effectiveness of such a campaign, which brought the inclusion of this requirement into question. The Board acknowledged that it is not the CAA's function to make such an assessment, but noted that the regulation of the overall survey activity lacked a risk-based approach, that some of the requirements were impractical, and that they could not easily be assessed for compliance. Additionally, dissemination of the ACN to the wider aviation community seemed to rely on the CANP mechanism, which the Board did not believe was sufficient to inform all those affected. With these aspects in mind, the Board resolved to make a recommendation to the CAA to re-examine future drafting and oversight of unusual airspace activity requests.

The Board decided that the Airprox was caused by the F406 pilot's flight in the vicinity of Brent Tor glider site without having conducted the coordination required by the survey task ACN. It was considered contributory that the F406 pilot had not contacted Brent Tor glider site, and that he did not take positive action to avoid the site. The Board also considered the lack of rigorous CAA oversight to be contributory. In the event, both pilots saw each other in good time and safety margins between the aircraft were not reduced. However, the proximity of the F406 pilot to the glider site, and his apparent lack of appreciation of the winch cable were a cause for concern.

### **PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK**

<u>Cause:</u>	The F406 pilot flew in the vicinity of a promulgated and active glider site without the coordination required by his survey task's ACN.
<u>Contributory Factor(s):</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The CAA did not exercise rigorous enough oversight of the survey operation.</li> <li>2. The F406 pilot did not contact Brent Tor glider site, as required by his ACN.</li> <li>3. The F406 pilot did not take positive action to avoid the glider site.</li> </ol>
<u>Degree of Risk:</u>	C.
<u>ERC Score</u> <sup>5</sup> :	4
<u>Recommendation:</u>	The CAA ensure that future considerations of unusual air activity requests employ a risk-based approach, are practical, are effectively promulgated and co-ordinated, and appropriately balance the needs of other operators.

<sup>5</sup> Although the Event Risk Classification (ERC) trial had been formally terminated for future development at the time of the Board, for data continuity and consistency purposes, Director UKAB and the UKAB Secretariat provided a shadow assessment of ERC.