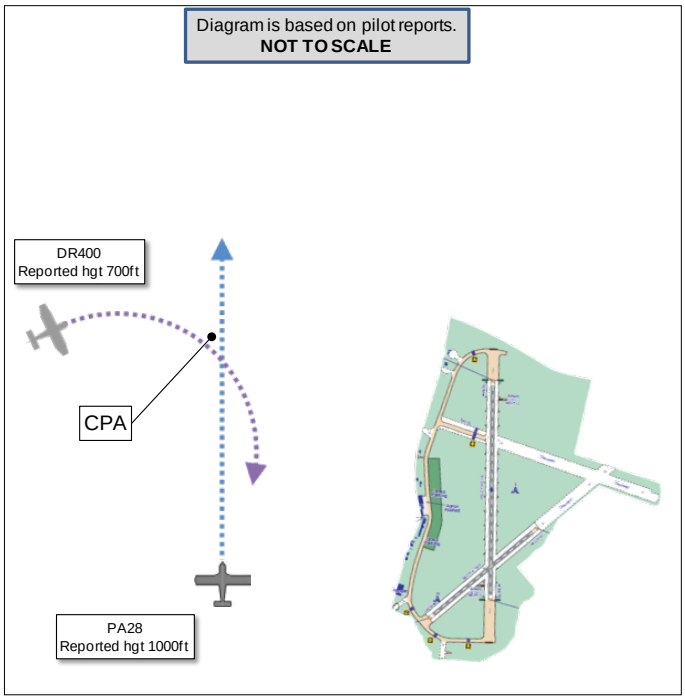
AIRPROX REPORT No 2012090

Date/Time: 27 Jun 2012 1450Z

Position: 5211N 00137W (DW RW18 RHC Wellesbourne Mountford - elev 159ft)

Airspace: ATZ (*Class: G*)

	Reporting Ac	*Reported Ac*
Type:	PA28	DR400
Operator:	Civ Trg	Civ Pte
Alt/FL:	1000ft QFE (1012hPa)	800ft (1015hPa)
Weather:	VMC CLBC	VMC Haze
Visibility:	>10km	>10km
Reported Separation:	50ft V/0m H	200ft V/60m H
Recorded Separation:	NR	



PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

THE PA28 PILOT reports flying downwind (DW) RW18 RHC, level at 1000ft QFE 1012hPa, heading (hdg) 360° at 90kt. The SSR transponder was selected 'on' with modes 3A/C and S, as were the '...anti-collision strobe and HISL'. He was flying an instructor training detail, teaching flapless approach instructional techniques, which required him to fly further DW than for a normal cct. His intentions were announced on RT prior to each cct. Additionally, the A/D requires a wide cct for noise abatement reasons but the ac remained within the ATZ during the incident cct. The pilot of a joining ac was heard on RT [reporting] 5nm NW of the A/D and stating his intention to join DW; he called "Wellesbourne Radio" which indicated he might not have been familiar with Wellesbourne as it operates under a FIS [C/S 'Wellesbourne Information']. The joining ac was not seen when he scanned visually to the W.

When he was late DW, abeam the RW18 threshold, the joining ac was sighted flying towards him on an estimated hdg of 170° at a similar level and an estimated range of 100m. The late sighting was attributed to the joining ac appearing from behind a blind spot and his lookout being concentrated towards where he assumed the joining ac would be. The joining ac pilot had been made aware on several occasions of the PA28's position by the FISO. Once he had climbed to avert the immediate collision risk, he declared an Airprox on RT. The other pilot was heard to say, "that was a close one" or words to that effect.

He assessed the collision risk as 'Medium'.

THE DR400 PILOT reports flying VFR from Blackpool to Wellesbourne. When the Airprox occurred he was in a RH turn at 80kt, level at 800ft with an altimeter setting of 1015hPa [height (hgt) 700ft Wellesbourne QFE 1012hPa]. The SSR transponder Mode 3A/C was selected 'on' with no Mode S fitted. The strobes and landing light were also selected 'on'. He had visited the A/D many times previously and it had been his habit to join the cct DW, a practice which had never attracted comment in the past. He also believed this practice made it easier to avoid noise sensitive areas 'under the cct'.

He had telephoned the A/D prior to departure and was told there '... was nothing particularly to know about ...', and that RW18 was in use. He arrived at the A/D from the W, having called joining and confirmed the RW in use at a range of 10nm. At that time he was aware of 2 ac in the cct, one of which was on approach, and the other that 'had just rolled through'.

He had some difficulty identifying the A/D, and then in confirming the A/D layout due to haze. He approached in a gentle descent, and by the time he had established his position he was well down the DW side of the RW having descended to 800ft [hgt 700ft]. However, he believed he was still some distance from the airfield, outside what he would normally have regarded as the cct pattern, so he turned R to intercept the upwind end of the DW leg. He remained level at hgt 700ft and informed Wellesbourne of his actions.

The FISO warned him of another ac close to his position [the subject PA28] which he saw almost simultaneously, 250m ahead, 200ft above and to his L. He continued his R turn maintaining visual contact with the PA28.

Recognising that he had a responsibility when joining the cct to give way to ac already established, he spoke with, and apologised to, the PA28 pilot on landing who pointed out that the O/H join was the preferred join at the A/D although there was no mention of this in the DR400 pilot's flight guide.

[UKAB Note(1): UK AIP, AD 2-EGBW-1-5, 2.22 – FLIGHT PROCEDURES states:

...

2. Arrivals
   a. Pilots are requested to contact Wellesbourne at least 10 minutes before ETA Wellesbourne.
   b. Overhead joins preferred.]

He also remarked that a call of "flapless" may not be enough for other pilots to fully understand how that may change an ac's cct pattern.

He assessed the collision risk as 'Low'.

THE WELLESBORNE MOUNTFORD FISO reports that the DR400 pilot contacted him for joining information, inbound from the NW. The PA28 pilot was already established in the RW18 cct pattern.

The DR400 pilot then requested to join DW, to which the FISO replied with cct traffic information and that a DW join would be at his discretion. He saw the DR400 pilot approaching from the W at cct height and realised there was a possible confliction with the PA28 pilot, who was DW at the time. He advised the DR400 pilot of the DW traffic [the subject PA28] in his 2 o'clock. The DR400 pilot reported that he was visual with the traffic. The PA28 pilot was then observed to take avoiding action by climbing, shortly after which he reported an Airprox.

ATSI reports that the pilot of a PA28 reported an Airprox in the Wellesbourne Mountford ATZ when he came into conflict with a DR400 at approximately 1450 UTC. The ATZ comprises Class G airspace defined by a circle radius 2nm centred on RW18/36 from surface to hgt 2000ft aal (elev 159ft).

The PA28 was operating VFR, undertaking instructor training ccts in the RW18 RHC and was in receipt of a BS from 'Wellesbourne Information' [124.025 MHz].

The DR400 was operating VFR on a flight from Blackpool to Wellesbourne Mountford and was in receipt of a BS from 'Wellesbourne Information'.

CAA ATSI had access to written reports from the pilots of both ac and the A/D FISO. It was not possible to extrapolate any details of the incident from area radar recordings as there was no Clee Hill radar availability at the time and therefore no recorded tracks below 2300ft in the subject location.

The Coventry METARs for 1420 and 1450 were reported as:

METAR EGBE 271420Z 21012KT 170V240 9999 SCT017 22/18 Q1016=
METAR EGBE 271450Z 22008KT 190V250 9999 SCT017 22/17 Q1016=

The written report from the A/D FISO stated that the DR400 requested joining instructions and was informed that there was a PA28 in the RW18 RHC. The DR400 requested a DW join and the FISO informed him that would be at his discretion. The FISO saw the DR400 approaching from the W, advised him of the potential confliction with the PA28 and expected him to position accordingly in the cct. The FISO observed the PA28 climb to avoid the DR400.

The Manual of Flight Information Services, CAP410 PART B, Chapter 1, Paragraph 7.4 states:

> 'Landing direction and traffic information on known traffic flying within the ATZ and the immediate surrounding local area is normally passed when the aircraft is still some distance away from the ATZ. This enables the pilot to determine if it is safe to proceed with the flight as planned and to intelligently position the aircraft in relation to other aircraft in the circuit pattern.'

Both ac were operating VFR in class G airspace so were ultimately responsible for collision avoidance.

[UKAB Note (2): The Rules of the Air Regulations 2007 (incorporating The Rules of the Air (Amendment) Regulations 2009), Schedule 1, Section 4, Paragraph 12 (Rule 12) states:

12 (1) Subject to paragraph (2), a flying machine, glider or airship flying in the vicinity of what the commander of the aircraft knows, or ought reasonably to know, to be an aerodrome shall:

(a) conform to the pattern of traffic formed by other aircraft intending to land at that aerodrome or keep clear of the airspace in which the pattern is formed; and

(b) make all turns to the left unless ground signals otherwise indicate.

(2) Paragraph (1) shall not apply if the air traffic control unit at that aerodrome otherwise authorises.

This extract is also published in CAP393, Air Navigation: The Order and the Regulations, section 2, section 4, para 12].

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available included written reports from the pilots of both ac and the Wellesbourne Mountford FISO.

The Board noted that although both pilots had an equal and shared responsibility to see and avoid, the DR400 pilot was required to conform to the pattern of traffic iaw Rule 12 of the RoA. Indeed, this Airprox was a prime example of why an O/H join is normally the safest way of joining a cct pattern. The Board opined that the slant range visibility in haze seemed to cause the DR400 pilot concern and that an O/H join would have kept him deconflicted from cct traffic whilst establishing the cct pattern wrt the A/D position and layout. The Board also noted it was probable that the DR400 pilot's habit of joining DW was reinforced by the absence of comment after previous DW joins. A DW join does not necessarily result in increased risk, but the habitual use of such a join does not take variable conditions into consideration and hence increases risk.

Although the PA28 pilot saw the DR400 late he increased separation by climbing and the Board was satisfied that his avoiding action had been effective. The Board also commended the FISO's actions in providing traffic information to the ac involved. Nevertheless, at the close ranges involved in this Airprox, Members agreed that safety had been compromised.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: The DR400 pilot did not conform to the cct traffic pattern, contrary to Rule 12 of the RoA, and flew into conflict with the PA28 downwind.

Degree of Risk: B.