

AIRPROX REPORT No 2010120

Date/Time: 2 Sep 2010 0923Z

Position: 5309N 00219W (0.75nm N
Arclid M/Light site - elev 262ft)

Airspace: LFIR (Class: G)

Reporting Ac Reported Ac

Type: Pegasus Quik MD900
GT450 Flexwing Explorer

Operator: Civ Trg Civ Pte

Alt/FL: 700ft 1300ft
(QFE 1012mb) (QNH)

Weather: VMC NR VMC CLOC

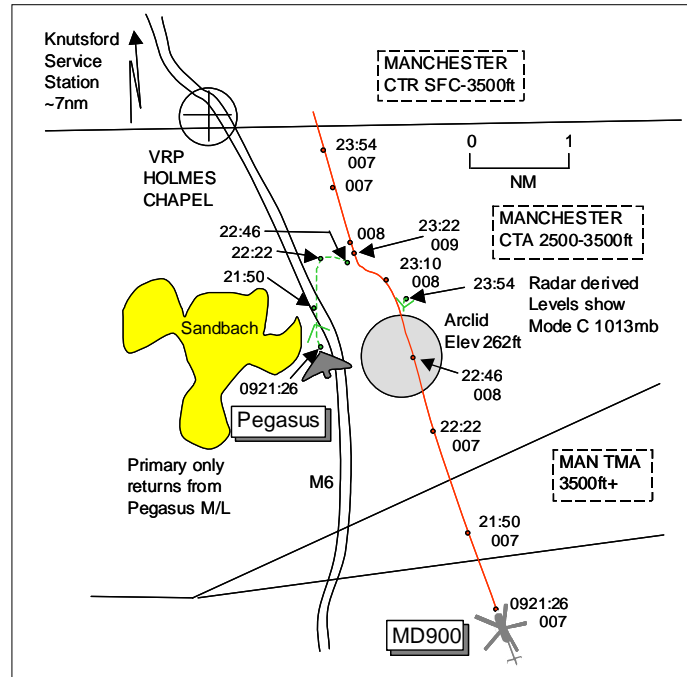
Visibility: >10km 20km

Reported Separation:

Nil V/200m H 100ft V/1000m H

Recorded Separation:

NR



PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

THE PEGASUS QUIK GT450 FLEXWING PILOT reports flying a dual training cct sortie from Arclid, VFR and monitoring the M/Light frequency 129.825MHz. The visibility was >10km in VMC and the ac's flexwing was coloured yellow/white. Whilst on R base leg RW20 at 700ft QFE heading 090° at 52kt, he was describing the next stage of flight to the student when he noticed movement in his R peripheral vision. On taking a closer look he saw a black or blue coloured medium sized helicopter, possibly a Eurocopter type, on a collision course heading 300° at the same height a few hundred metres away (0.25nm). He took control and descended to the L noting the helicopter also took avoiding action, he thought, by turning to its L; the helicopter then passed down his RHS by 200m. After landing he contacted Manchester Airport to report the Airprox. He believed there was a high risk of collision as the helicopter flew through the centre of an area of intense M/Light activity - the airfield is shown on charts - at cct height, with the ac involved being close enough such that the pilots felt the need to take avoiding action.

THE MD900 EXPLORER PILOT reports en-route to Barton, VFR and in communication with Manchester Approach, squawking an assigned code with Modes S and C. The visibility was 20km in VMC and the ac was coloured black with strobe lights on. Heading 350° at 1300ft QNH and 110kt they saw a powered delta-wing hang-glider about 1000m away as it was already passing down their LHS about 100ft above. In their opinion this was not an Airprox, there being no risk of collision and no avoiding action was taken by either ac.

UKAB Note (1): The UKAB Secretariat telephoned the Capt of the MD900 to discuss the disparate viewpoints of the incident. After informing the Capt of the geometry, he stated that the M/Light he had seen in the area had passed well clear to his L and above, not to his R and below as reported by the Pegasus pilot. Also, he had not made an avoiding action L turn near to Arclid but thought it might have been a track change to comply with the limit of the clearance issued by Manchester ATC to remain W of a VRP.

ATSI reports that the Airprox occurred at 0923, in the vicinity of Arclid airfield, situated in Class G airspace, 12.5nm to the SSW of Manchester Airport. Arclid is notified in AIP ENR 5-5-4-1 as a Microlight site (elevation 262ft). The Airprox was reported by the pilot of a Pegasus Quik GT450

M/Light, operating VFR in the cct for RW20 at Arclid airfield and not in receipt of an ATS. The Manchester METAR: EGCC 020920Z 00000KT 9999 NSC 18/11 Q1022 NOSIG=

At 0910:00 the MD900 pilot contacted Manchester Radar reporting on a VFR flight from a private site near Eastbourne en-route to Manchester Barton. The pilot reported at altitude 1400ft, QNH 1022, and requested a BS. Radar recording showed the helicopter's position as 25nm SSE of Arclid airfield tracking 350°. Manchester Radar agreed a BS and allocated a squawk 7353. At 0911.20 the MD900 pilot reported 4nm SW of Stafford and the pilot was instructed to plan on a direct route to Barton but to remain outside CAS. At 0916:50 Manchester Radar identified the MD900 and confirmed a BS outside CAS however, there was no response from the pilot.

At 0918:00 Manchester Radar advised the MD900 pilot to route W of Knutsford Services [10nm NNW Arclid on the M6] to enter the CTR then direct to Barton not above 1250ft VFR. This was acknowledged correctly by the pilot. The radar recording showed the MD900 10nm SSE of Arclid and tracking 340° towards Arclid airfield.

[UKAB Note (2): By 0921:26 the MD900 is 4.2nm SSE of Arclid indicating FL007 (970ft QNH 1022mb) with an intermittent primary only return, believed to be the Pegasus M/Light, 0.75nm W of Arclid tracking 360° in the MD900's 1130 position range 3-25nm. The Pegasus M/Light continues on steady track until 0922:22 when it is seen to commence a R turn, rolling out on an E'ly track base leg for RW20. The Pegasus M/Light fades after the sweep at 0922:46 when it is 1nm NW of Arclid at which time the MD900 is passing O/H Arclid indicating FL008 (1070ft QNH). As the MD900 reaches 0.8nm N of Arclid it turns L about 45° for a short period before resuming track. Just as the MD900 is about to enter the Manchester CTR at 0923:54, the Pegasus M/Light reappears on radar 0.4nm N of Arclid tracking 190° on final for RW20. The CPA is not captured as it occurs during the radar fade period of the Pegasus whilst on base leg.]

At 0926:14 the MD900 pilot reported abeam Knutsford, routing direct to Barton not above 1250ft VFR and 2min later at 0928:13 the flight was transferred to Manchester Barton retaining the squawk.

The Manchester Radar controller has no recollection of the MD900 pilot making any comment about the incident, whilst in receipt of a BS. MATS Pt1 Section 1, Chapter 11, Page 4, paragraph 3.1.1, states:

'A Basic Service is an ATS provided for the purpose of giving advice and information useful for the safe and efficient conduct of flights. This may include weather information, changes of serviceability of facilities, conditions at aerodromes, general airspace activity information, and any other information likely to affect safety. The avoidance of other traffic is solely the pilot's responsibility.'

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available included reports from the pilots of both ac, transcripts of the relevant RT frequencies, radar video recordings and reports from the appropriate ATC authorities.

Members agreed that this Airprox would not have occurred had the MD900 pilot taken due regard of the airspace in which he was flying. Arclid is marked on 1:250000 and 1:500000 charts and as such M/Lights should be expected in the cct area during daylight hours. All that was required was a small course deviation early on to route clear of the O/H and/or a cruising altitude that was well above the cct. In this case the MD900 pilot flew through the Arclid O/H at cct height and came into conflict with the Pegasus M/Light, which he did not see, and this had caused the Airprox.

The MD900's L turn, reported by the Pegasus pilot as avoiding action, was in fact a navigational turn, but it helped to increase the separation between the 2 ac as they passed. The Pegasus pilot did well to spot the approaching MD900, owing to its small head-on target aspect, about 0.25nm away and had turned L to avoid it, estimating separation as 200m. This prompt manoeuvre flown by the

Pegasus pilot was enough to convince the Board that any risk of collision had been effectively removed.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK

Cause: The MD900 pilot flew through a promulgated and active M/Light site and into conflict with the Pegasus M/Light, which he did not see.

Degree of Risk: C.