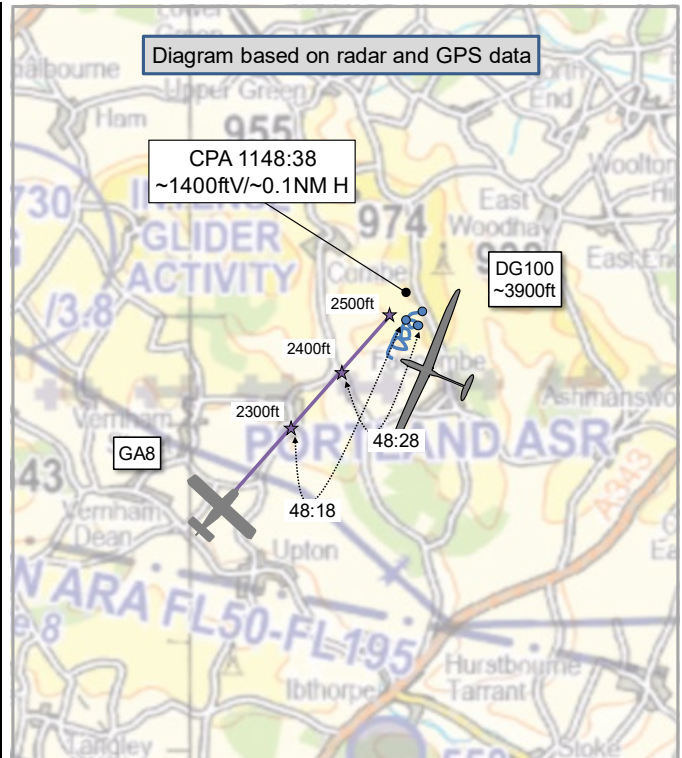


AIRPROX REPORT No 2023161

Date: 26 Jul 2023 Time: 1148Z Position: 5120N 00127W Location: Faccombe

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	DG100	GA8 Airvan
Operator	Civ Glid	Civ Comm
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	None	Basic
Provider		Boscombe Down
Altitude/FL	~3900ft	2500ft
Transponder	Not fitted	A, C, S
Reported		
Colours	White	White
Lighting	Nil	Landing, Nav, Strobes, Beacon.
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	>10km	>10km
Altitude/FL	~3000ft	3000ft
Altimeter	QFE	QNH
Heading	Thermalling	NE
Speed	50kt	120kt
ACAS/TAS	FLARM	SkyEcho
Alert	None	None
Separation at CPA		
Reported	50-100ft V/150m H	Not Seen
Recorded	~1400ftV/~0.1NM H	



THE DG100 PILOT reports that they were on a local soaring flight from [departure airfield]. They were thermalling approximately 6.5km east of the [departure] airfield (notably overhead a wind turbine at Faccombe) whilst monitoring the airfield frequency. They were thermalling at approximately 2kts climb rate with right-hand turns. The first thing that alerted them to the other aircraft was the engine noise, then they sighted the aircraft whilst they were pointing towards the northeast, in the thermalling turn. They could identify the aircraft as a white, with a box-like fuselage, high-wing single prop. The angle to the side of the fuselage was too small to ascertain the side registration markings, however this was looked up on FlightRadar24 subsequently. As the aircraft quickly diverged after the sighting, they continued the right-hand thermalling turn, so did not sight it again until the next whole 360° turn. The aircraft appeared to be on the same heading with a lower altitude. They continued the flight without incident afterwards.

The pilot assessed the risk of collision as ‘Medium’.

THE GA8 PILOT reports that they did not see the other aircraft. When planning their flight they called a notified gliding competition further north with no answer and successfully called 2 aerial survey sites to assess their impact.

THE BOSCOMBE LARS CONTROLLER reports that they were notified several weeks after the event that a glider had submitted an Airprox after transiting close to a Basic Service transit aircraft that was on the LARS frequency. They had no recollection of this flight as they work multiple Basic Service transit aircraft and often call gliders or suspected gliders to them; no Airprox was called by the pilot on frequency at the time. From looking at the tape transcript, a glider aircraft was called to the [pilot of the] aircraft on their frequency and they were visual with it and estimated the separation to be 200ft.

Factual Background

The weather at Boscombe Down was recorded as follows:

METAR EGDM 261120Z AUTO 22010KT 9999 -RA BKN042/// 19/09 Q1013=
METAR EGDM 261150Z 23013KT 9999 FEW040 SCT140 BKN220 20/11 Q1012 NOSIG RMK BLU BLU=

Analysis and Investigation

Military ATM

Utilising occurrence reports and information from the local investigation outlined below are the key events that preceded the Airprox. The DG100 glider was not detected by NATS radars at any stage throughout.

As a result of the Airprox not being notified to Boscombe Down Air Traffic Control until several weeks after the event, the Boscombe Down Lower Airspace Radar Service controller had no recollection of the event. Their occurrence report was compiled based on a review of the tape transcript, which showed that during the period preceding the Airprox the only traffic in receipt of a service from the Boscombe Down Lower Airspace Radar Service controller was the GA-8 Airvan.

Sequence of Events

At 1143:02, the GA-8 Airvan [pilot] contacted the Boscombe Down Lower Airspace Radar Service controller informing them of their departure from [departure airfield] and routing to Compton. A Boscombe Down Mode 3A code was issued along with a Basic Service and associated regional pressure setting.

At 1144:33, the Boscombe Down Lower Airspace Radar Service controller provided the GA-8 Airvan [pilot] with Traffic Information on an unknown contact; *“traffic believed to be you has traffic east three miles tracking south indicating five hundred feet above”*. The GA-8 Airvan pilot acknowledged the Traffic Information with; *“looking”*.

At 1147:48, the Boscombe Down Lower Airspace Radar Service controller provided the GA-8 Airvan pilot with further Traffic Information on an unknown contact; *“traffic believed to be you has traffic north-east two miles manoeuvring no height information”*. The GA-8 Airvan pilot responded to the Traffic Information; *“Visual thanks glider about two hundred feet above me”*.

No further Traffic Information was then passed.

CPA was unknown due to the DG100 glider not displaying on NATS radars, however, estimated by the DG100 glider [pilot] as 150m and 50-100ft.

Local BM Investigation(s)

The local investigation conducted by Boscombe Down Air Traffic Control was unable to identify any contributory factors that led to the Airprox, as a result of the controller having no recollection of the events when eventually informed of the Airprox. The tape transcript shows that Traffic Information was provided which subsequently the GA-8 Airvan pilot identified as a glider, however, it could not be proven definitively that the glider sighted was the Airprox glider.

2 Gp BM Analysis

The Boscombe Down Lower Airspace Radar Service controller fulfilled the duties required of them in law the Basic Service requested by the GA-8 Airvan pilot. The provision of Traffic Information that subsequently led to the GA-8 Airvan pilot visually acquiring a glider was in excess of the Basic Service requirement, however, certainly aided in increasing the GA-8 Airvan pilot's situational

awareness. Based upon the limited evidence available, the Boscombe Down Lower Airspace Radar Service controller provided a suitable Basic Service ATS provision to the GA-8 Airvan pilot.

UKAB Secretariat

An analysis of the NATS radar was undertaken. The GA8 could be identified using Mode S data, climbing to FL023, the Portland QNH was 1008hPa. A primary track could briefly be seen in the vicinity of the glider pilot's thermalling area, but this primary contact disappeared after just a few radar sweeps (Figure 1). The glider pilot supplied GPS data and the diagram at the top of the report has been compiled using the two data sources.

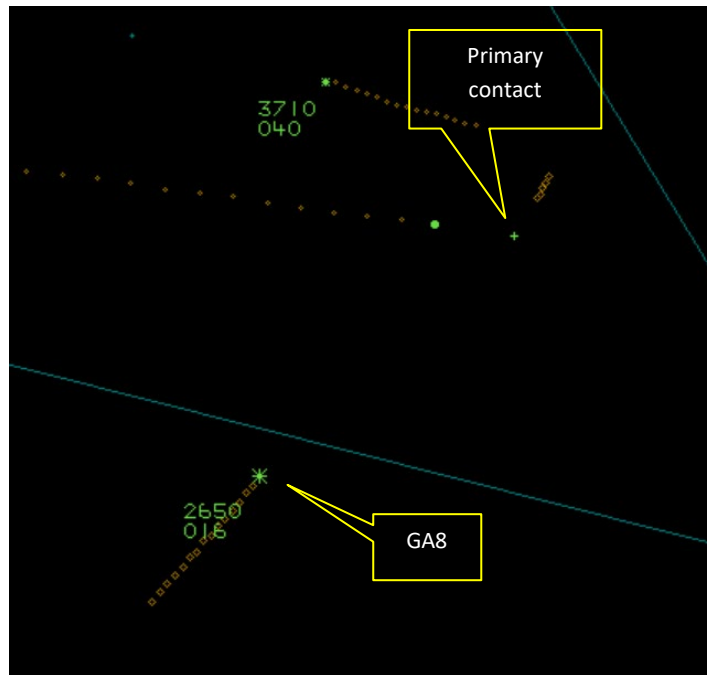


Figure 1 - 1146:47

The GA8 continued on track, until in the vicinity of the glider's thermalling, still indicating FL023, Figure 2. It was estimated that the two aircraft were at their closest at 1148:38, when the glider's GPS indicated that they were at around 3900ft AMSL.

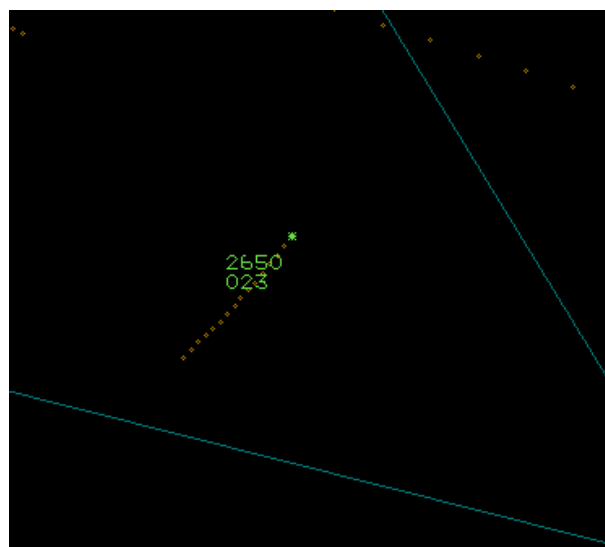


Figure 2 -1148:38

The DG100 and GA8 pilots shared an equal responsibility for collision avoidance and not to operate in such proximity to other aircraft as to create a collision hazard.¹ If the incident geometry is considered as converging then the GA8 pilot was required to give way to the DG100.² If the incident geometry is considered as overtaking then the DG100 pilot had right of way and the GA8 pilot was required to keep out of the way of the other aircraft by altering course to the right.³

Comments

AOPA

If any pilot considers they have encountered an Airprox, it is essential they report it on the frequency in use, or to the nearest ATC unit, as soon as practicable. Alternatively, it can be reported by phone on landing or via the UKAB App. This ensures relevant information can be obtained before memories fade or the information is overwritten. In this case it is interesting that the EC didn't work as expected.

BGA

This incident once again highlights the difficulty of seeing an aircraft approaching head-on when thermalling in a glider.

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a DG100 and a GA8 flew into proximity at Faccombe at 1148Z on Wednesday 26th July 2023. Both pilots were operating under VFR in VMC, the GA8 pilot in receipt of a Basic Service from Boscombe LARS and the DG100 pilot not in receipt of an ATS.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of reports from both pilots, radar photographs and GPS data, a report from the air traffic controllers involved and reports from the appropriate operating authorities.

The Board was unable to resolve the conflict between the glider pilot's reported separation and the separation indicated by comparing the GPS and radar data, and they wondered whether the incident had occurred on a different day or time. Although the GA8 pilot had reported seeing a glider on the RT, other gliders could be seen on ADS-B at that time and members thought that the GA8 pilot, given they described the separation as 200ft, had probably seen a different glider. With such conflicting data unable to be reconciled, the Board therefore reluctantly agreed that neither the contributory factors, nor the risk could be assessed.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors: The contributory factors could not be assessed.

Degree of Risk: D.

Safety Barrier Assessment⁴

In assessing the effectiveness of the safety barriers associated with this incident, the Board concluded that the Safety Barriers could not be assessed.

¹ UK Reg (EU) SERA.3205 Proximity.

² UK Reg (EU) SERA.3210 Right-of-way (c)(2) Converging.

³ UK Reg (EU) SERA.3210 Right-of-way (c)(3) Overtaking.

⁴ The UK Airprox Board scheme for assessing the Availability, Functionality and Effectiveness of safety barriers can be found on the [UKAB Website](#).