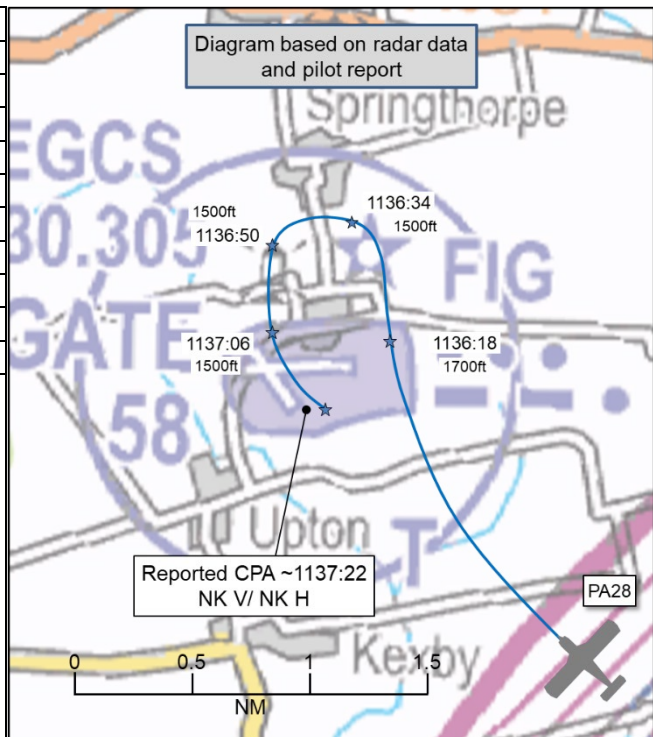


AIRPROX REPORT No 2024221

Date: 26 Aug 2024 Time: ~1137Z Position: 5322N 00040W Location: Sturgate Airfield

PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2	
Aircraft	PA28	Untraced aircraft	
Operator	Civ FW	Unknown	
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR	
Class	G	G	
Rules	VFR	NK	
Service	AGCS	NK	
Provider	Sturgate Radio	NK	
Altitude/FL	1700ft	NK	
Transponder	A, C, S	None	
Reported			
Colours	White and red	Untraced	
Lighting	Strobes, nav, low-level		
Conditions	VMC		
Visibility	>10km		
Altitude/FL	14-1600ft		
Altimeter	QFE (1015hPa)		
Heading	180°		
Speed	90kt		
ACAS/TAS	SkyEcho		
Alert	None		
Separation at CPA			
Reported	0ft V/300m H		NK
Recorded	NK		



THE PA28 PILOT reports that, during a deadside descent at Sturgate, they had noticed another aircraft to their west during the descent. It had appeared to be at a similar level and closing. No R/T call from any other stations had been heard aside from A/G at Sturgate. SkyDemon was operating with [electronic conspicuity (EC) equipment] and the other aircraft was not identified on EC. The pilot reports that they had taken avoiding action by their increasing rate of descent significantly.

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

THE OTHER AIRCRAFT PILOT could not be traced.

THE STURGATE OPERATING AUTHORITY reports that they can confirm that the PA28 had visited Sturgate Airfield from [departure airfield] on the 26th of August, signing in at 1145 and out at 1210. They had spoken with the member of staff present on the day and they had not been made aware of any incident.

Factual Background

The weather at Waddington was recorded as follows:

METAR EGXW 261120Z AUTO 24012KT 9999 OVC033/// 19/10 Q1017=

Analysis and Investigation

UKAB Secretariat

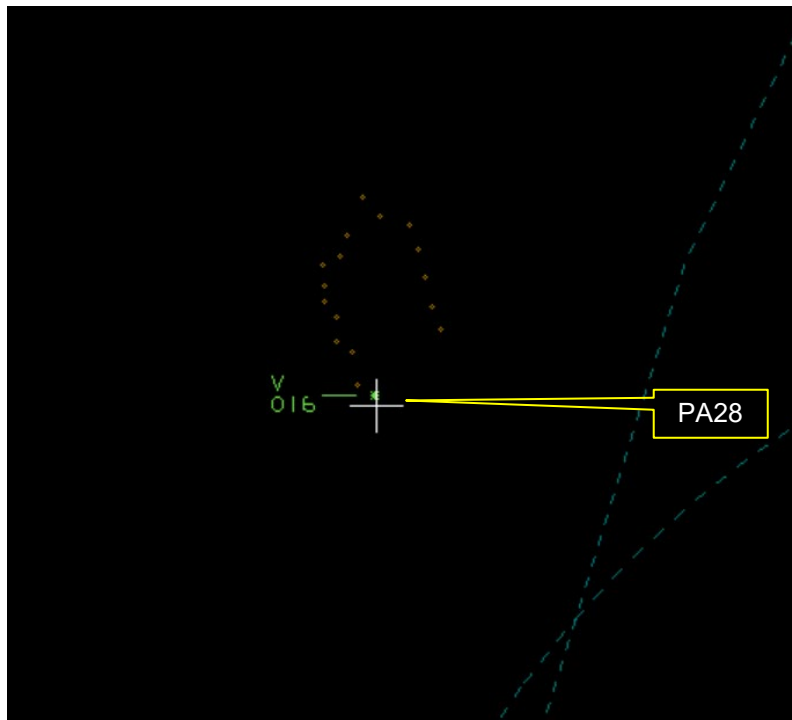


Figure 1: at 1137:22. White cross represents position of reported Airprox.



Figure 2: This MLAT trace shows the path of the PA28 on its approach to RW27 at Sturgate, with the snapshot taken at the time the PA28 ceased to refresh (1141:00). The second aircraft did not appear.

The PA28 pilot reports that, on sighting the second aircraft, they had taken avoiding action by increasing their rate of descent significantly. Radar tracing showed that descent to have been approximately 500ft in around 10sec. The second aircraft did not show on radar, ADS-B tracking tools or the CAA's Airspace Analyser Tool.

The PA28 and the untraced aircraft 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 An aircraft operated on or in the vicinity of an aerodrome shall conform with or avoid the pattern of traffic formed by other aircraft in operation.²

Summary

An Airprox was reported when a PA28 and an unknown aircraft flew into proximity at Sturgate airfield at approximately 1137Z on Monday 26th August 2024. The PA28 pilot was operating under VFR in VMC and in receipt of an AGCS from Sturgate Radio. The unknown aircraft pilot could not be traced.

PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS

Information available consisted of a report from the PA28 pilot, radar photographs/video recordings, GPS data and a report from the AGO involved. Relevant contributory factors mentioned during the Board's discussions are highlighted within the text in bold, with the numbers referring to the Contributory Factors table displayed in Part C.

In reviewing this event, Board members recognised that the report submitted by the PA28 pilot had clearly described the situation they encountered. The Sturgate AGO had reported that they had not been made aware of the event. Unfortunately, despite significant effort, the other involved aircraft could not be traced. On reviewing radar replays covering the reported area for a period 30min either side of the reported time of CPA, no trace of any other aircraft could be seen. Additionally, a review of the CAA's Airspace Analyser tool, alongside other aircraft tracking applications, offered no further information. The PA28 pilot had made every effort to ensure their presence had been clearly noted through R/T with Sturgate, operation of an active Mode S transponder and the carriage and use of a commonly-carried electronic conspicuity unit. Despite this, the PA28 pilot had not had any situational awareness of the presence of the other aircraft (**CF1**) and had achieved only a late sighting of it (**CF2**) as they had positioned for an approach. It was not possible to make an estimation of separation at CPA. The Board concluded that insufficient information was available to determine the risk involved and awarded Risk Category D to the event with the following contributory factors:

CF1: The PA28 pilot had no situational awareness of the proximity of the other aircraft.

CF2: The PA28 pilot achieved only a late-sighting of the other aircraft.

PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AND RISK

Contributory Factors:

CF	Factor	Description	ECCAIRS Amplification	UKAB Amplification
Flight Elements				
• Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action				
1	Contextual	• Situational Awareness and Sensory Events	Events involving a flight crew's awareness and perception of situations	Pilot had no, late, inaccurate or only generic, Situational Awareness
• See and Avoid				
2	Human Factors	• Identification/ Recognition	Events involving flight crew not fully identifying or recognising the reality of a situation	Late sighting by one or both pilots

Degree of Risk: D.

Safety Barrier Assessment³

¹ (UK) SERA.3205 Proximity.

² (UK) SERA.3225 Operation on and in the Vicinity of an Aerodrome..

³ The UK Airprox Board scheme for assessing the Availability, Functionality and Effectiveness of safety barriers can be found on the [UKAB Website](#).

In assessing the effectiveness of the safety barriers associated with this incident, the Board concluded that the key factors had been that:

Ground Elements:

Situational Awareness of the Confliction and Action were assessed as **not used** because the Sturgate AGO was not required to sequence traffic in the circuit.

Flight Elements:

Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft and Action were assessed as **ineffective** because the PA28 pilot had no awareness of the presence of the other aircraft prior to sighting it.

See and Avoid were assessed as **partially effective** because the PA28 pilot had achieved only a late sighting of the other aircraft.

Airprox Barrier Assessment: 2024221		Outside Controlled Airspace		Effectiveness				
Barrier		Provision	Application	Barrier Weighting				
				0%	5%	10%	15%	20%
Ground Element	Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance	✓	✓	[Green bar to 5%]				
	Manning & Equipment	✓	✓	[Green bar to 2.5%]				
	Situational Awareness of the Confliction & Action	✗	○	[Red bar to 15%]				
	Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance	●	●	[Grey bar to 2.5%]				
Flight Element	Regulations, Processes, Procedures and Compliance	✓	✓	[Green bar to 10%]				
	Tactical Planning and Execution	●	●	[Grey bar to 10%]				
	Situational Awareness of the Conflicting Aircraft & Action	✗	✓	[Red bar to 20%]				
	Electronic Warning System Operation and Compliance	●	●	[Grey bar to 15%]				
	See & Avoid	!	!	[Yellow bar to 20%]				
Key:		Full	Partial	None	Not Present/Not Assessable	Not Used		
Provision	✓	●	✗	●				
Application	✓	●	✗	●	○			
Effectiveness	[Green]	[Yellow]	[Red]	[Grey]	[Red box]			