

# News Release

30 November 2010

## **LOWEST AIRPROX NUMBERS IN A DECADE – UKAB PUBLISHES LATEST REPORT**

The number of reported airprox incidents involving commercial passenger jets in 2009 hit a ten-year low, the specialist body charged with their investigation said today (an airprox is a situation where a pilot or air traffic controller feels a loss of separation between aircraft may have compromised safety). The UK Airprox Board (UKAB) said that year-on-year airspace conflicts involving one or more commercial aircraft had almost halved, with only 35 incidents in 2009 compared to 61 in 2008. Of these, only a single incident was judged to be possibly risk-bearing. None were placed in the most serious category – that involving a genuine risk of collision.

Overall, the total numbers of airprox incidents, which also include military and private aircraft, declined in 2009 – down to 147 from 155 in 2008. The data also reveals a slight fall in incidents involving general aviation aircraft – 95 compared to 98 the previous year.

Commenting on the figures the Director of UKAB, Ian Dugmore, said: “It is obviously very encouraging that the number of airprox incidents during 2009 was the lowest for more than 10 years. However, given the low number of events, caution is required in deducing trends from the data. Nevertheless, the reduction in Airprox involving commercial air transport maintains a trend established in previous years.”

UKAB also said the low number of incidents involving passenger aircraft could have been affected by the economic climate and the reduction in air traffic in 2009.

UKAB reports, produced jointly for the Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority and the Chief of the Air Staff, Royal Air Force, are principally aimed at UK pilots and air traffic controllers, both civil and military. Their purpose is to promote air safety awareness and understanding by identifying and sharing the lessons arising from UK Airprox incidents.

The bi-annual UKAB reports are distributed in hardcopy and CD format. The latest report, Book 23, as well as previous reports are also downloadable from the UKAB website [https:// HYPERLINK "http://www.airproxboard.org.uk"](http://www.airproxboard.org.uk)  
[www.airproxboard.org.uk/](http://www.airproxboard.org.uk)

Individual Airprox reports are also published on the UKAB website some six to eight weeks after assessment by the Airprox Board.

For more information contact the CAA Press Office on tel.020 7453 6030;  
[press.office@caa.co.uk](mailto:press.office@caa.co.uk)

**Notes to Editors:**

An Airprox is defined as: *a situation in which, in the opinion of a pilot or controller, the distance between aircraft, as well as their relative positions and speed, have been such that the safety of the aircraft was, or may have been, compromised.*

The UKAB is made up predominantly of pilots and controllers. It comprises a Chairman (the Director) and a mix of civil and military Members, all acknowledged experts within their fields of aviation. Their expertise covers commercial air transport, general aviation and military flying (both fixed wing and rotary), along with civil and military air traffic control.

The UKAB does not apportion blame or liability and has no legal powers: its sole aim is to enhance flight safety by assessing what happened in terms of 'cause' and 'risk' and then raising awareness of the findings within the aviation community. Where appropriate, the UKAB can make specific safety recommendations for changes in procedures or, for instance, the introduction of new equipment.

There are four risk categories agreed at international level, as follows:

- |   |                      |  |
|---|----------------------|--|
| A | risk of collision    | an actual risk of collision existed  |
| B | safety not assured   | the safety of the aircraft was compromised   |
| C | no risk of collision | no risk of collision existed   |
| D | risk not determined  | insufficient information was available to determine the risk involved, or inconclusive or conflicting evidence precluded such determination. |

Names or operators' identities are not published. Disidentification is a deliberate policy to encourage open and honest reporting.

For further information contact Richard Taylor on: 0207 453 6025 or the Ministry of Defence Press Office, on: 0207 218 1534. More information is available on the UKAB Website [www.airproxboard.org.uk](http://www.airproxboard.org.uk)

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