The 21st report of the UK Airprox Board (UKAB) was published on 22nd July. It covers statistics for all of 2008 together with findings on recorded Airprox incidents within UK airspace between July and December 2008. During the last six months of 2008, 68 Airprox were reported and investigated, 22 fewer than the average of comparable figures recorded in each of the previous five years. During 2008 there was a total of 155 Airprox compared with 154 in 2007. Of these, 61 involved at least one Commercial Air Transport (CAT) aircraft compared with 65 in 2007. Two of the 61 incidents were judged as risk-bearing, the lowest number recorded in the period 1999 to 2008. There were no Category A (actual risk of collision) events involving CAT aircraft recorded in 2008.

Peter Hunt, Director of UKAB, commented, “This is a very pleasing result. It is a fitting tribute to all in the CAT segment of the aviation industry – particularly the professional pilots, air traffic controllers and engineers – who continue to strive hard for ever-improving flight safety. Similarly, the downward trend in the CAT risk-bearing rate continues, the year-on-year improvement moving from 0.31 to 0.12, the latter being the CAT Airprox rate per 100,000 hours flown in 2008. In 2008, rates for Airprox involving general aviation aircraft were at figures comparable to 2007 whilst those for military aircraft returned to 2006 levels.”

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. They are also downloadable from the UKAB website www.airproxboard.org.uk. All Airprox reports are also published on the UKAB website some six to eight weeks after assessment by the Airprox Board.

Definition
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.

**Four categories of risk**

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.