

GA1344

Posted on 18.08.2023 by Steve Forward

Category: [General Aviation](#)

Report Title Pleasure Flights Within the Circuit

Initial Report

There was an [Aircraft] doing figure-of-8 patterns within the circuit over the runway at 500ft. An email had gone out to private owners declaring that the aircraft would be operating, but not that it would be in the overhead. I'm unaware if anything had been added to the PPR page on the website. A couple of other resident owners mentioned that they were somewhat surprised to see an aircraft flying in the opposite direction 300ft below whilst downwind in the circuit. Without a NOTAM in place, or someone in the Tower on radio, it seemed an unusual activity that represented 'in my humble opinion' an unacceptable risk should a visiting aircraft need to have 'gone round' and climbed into the pattern taken up by the [Aircraft]. The [Aircraft] was operating with a good radio and could be heard but, having said that, one shouldn't assume that everyone's radio installation is to the same standard, and there is always the opportunity for two stations to be transmitting at the same time and the message doesn't get heard.

Comment

The airfield accepted that more could have been done to highlight the pleasure-flight activity by NOTAM to both resident and non-resident pilots, and that they will do so in future. Whilst it is true that the airfield's website PPR page warns that all aircraft wishing to use the airfield should be aware that they must stay well clear of any aircraft carrying out display practices at the airfield, and we note the airfield operator's comment that, *"For operational reasons, it is not possible to prohibit arrivals/departures to accommodate the activity because the exact flight times are subject to variation on the day"*, CHIRP thinks that there is a case that, given their potential for conflict in the circuit, activities such as figure-of-8 pleasure flights over the airfield should be constrained to specified, promulgated time slots that other pilots can then plan to avoid rather than operating at *ad hoc* times.

Key Issues

Dirty Dozen Human Factors

The following 'Dirty Dozen' Human Factors elements were a key part of the CHIRP discussions about this report and are intended to provide food for thought when considering aspects that might be

pertinent in similar circumstances.

Resources – availability of Tower/ATS during an unusual activity.

Communication – a NOTAM highlighting the activity would have been preferable.

Complacency – regular unusual activities may lead to an assumption that other pilots will be aware of the associated risks; unusual activities such as pleasure flights should be constrained to specified, promulgated time slots.

lack_of_resourcesResources

poor_communicationCommunication

complacencyComplacency



