

SAFETY GRAM 4.0

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Air Force Aero Clubs,

Have you ever had a close call with another aircraft while flying? I have had a few and in most of the instances one of the aircraft was operating VFR. I have two memorable experiences to share. First, while training on an instrument approach in the E-3 I had a TCAS "Traffic Advisory" with a GA aircraft taking off from an airport near the instrument approach path. In this case the GA aircraft had extended their departure leg toward me and was climbing up into me. It was extremely unnerving because my entire crew was unable to pick up the other aircraft visually until they finally started to turn away from our approach path. I am pretty sure the other aircraft probably had acquired us visually (E-3's are difficult to miss that close), but they were not talking to ATC and we found out after the fact they did not follow an established departure procedure to avoid situations like this. After a review we were within 2000 ft. vertical and co-altitude when they finally turned away from our approach path.

The second situation involves flying a low-level training sortie with a pilot training student. While on the low level I had to take control and climb to avoid a GA aircraft doing a practice instrument approach, while operating VFR, which crossed the low-level route. Fortunately, we had this area marked as a potential conflict on our chart, were monitoring the airports CTAF while approaching, and had TCAS to provide early warning of the traffic so I was able to visually find the traffic and avoid it. In this instance the GA aircraft was either not monitoring or did not hear our radio calls on the airports CTAF because they never made any radio calls while on their practice approach or acknowledged ours. Although, no one was particularly "at fault" in this situation it would have been ideal if both aircraft had communication exchanges to avoid the conflict all together.

Attached is some information from the FAA library on How to Avoid Mid Air Collisions. Additionally, take some time and think of the biggest threat in your operating areas for Mid Air Collisions and how you can successfully avoid and mitigate them. Finally, be sure you have access, are familiar with, and involved in your Wing's Mid Air Collision Avoidance (MACA) program.

Fly Safely,



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