

ATSB report: Effective see-and-avoid techniques needed at non-towered aerodromes

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) is urging pilots to ensure they use effective see-and-avoid techniques to avoid traffic conflicts when flying at non-towered aerodromes.

Investigation by the ATSB into a traffic conflict between a Robinson R22 and a Cessna C208 highlights the importance of pilots maintaining a constant visual lookout to avoid traffic conflicts. This was reported by ATSB on 5 September 2018.

On 19 September 2017, a Cessna C208 (VH-SJJ) and a Robinson R22 (VH-MFH) came into traffic conflict at the Ballina Byron Gateway Airport. The Cessna entered and rolled on runway 06 while the Robinson was on its short final at 200 ft about two thirds along the same runway.

The ATSB found that despite the use of the common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF) and the certified air/ground radio service (CA/GRO) to advise of their positions by both pilots and instructor on board VH-MFH (MFH was on a training circuit) the pilot of VH-SJJ moved onto the runway before he had visually identified the helicopter.

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ATSB Executive Director, Transport Safety, Nat Nagy says that traffic conflicts are among the most common occurrences at non-towered aerodromes.

As Nagy said: *‘The proper use of the CTAF and the CA/GRO are important tools to build your situational and traffic awareness, but it is also important to maintain a constant visual lookout to confirm the information you are receiving.’*

‘There are high workloads while flying in and around airports. Things can change quickly, updates on what is happening can take time to reach a pilot, or they can be misheard or not heard at all.’

‘Maintaining constant visual awareness is a vital technique to ensure you are able to operate safely.’

To read the ATSB investigation report, AO-2017-097: *Traffic conflict involving Cessna 208, VH-SJJ and Robinson R22, VH-MFH, Ballina Byron Gateway*

Airport, NSW, on 19 September 2017 readers are invited to see here: https://www.atsb.gov.au/publications/investigation_reports/2017/air/ao-2017-097/

An introduction to additional reading: *A pilot's guide to staying safe in the vicinity of non-controlled aerodromes* is to be found here: [https://www.atsb.gov.au/publications/2008/avoidable-1-ar-2008-044\(1\)](https://www.atsb.gov.au/publications/2008/avoidable-1-ar-2008-044(1)) with the publication here: [https://www.atsb.gov.au/media/4117372/AR-2008-044\(1\).pdf](https://www.atsb.gov.au/media/4117372/AR-2008-044(1).pdf)

Picture caption

*Approximate location of aircraft when the C208 pilot called entering and rolling,
Ballina Bryon Gateway Airport, New South Wales.*

Source: Google Earth, annotated by the ATSB ©