PRINCE WILLIAM’S AIR AMBULANCE NEARLY HIT BY DRONE NARROWLY AVERTING DISASTER

News / Personalities

Prince William’s air ambulance came within seconds of catastrophic mid air-collision with a drone.

The helicopter, which the Prince flies regularly but was not on board at the time, came within half a second of hitting the remote controlled-device as it flew over a McDonald’s near Enfleld

An official report stated that a collision had only been ‘narrowly avoided’ with aviation experts telling the Mail on Sunday that it would have likely ended with those on board dying in a crash, as well as casualities son the ground.

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Near misses with drones have become a more regular occurrence, with one narrowly missing a passenger plane over London recently.

The East Anglian Air Ambulance was flying at 138mph when the incident occurred and it was only sheer luck the prince was not on board at the time.

Prince William's air ambulance nearly hit by drone narrowly averting disaster

Image not found or type unknown

Police were alerted to the incident but the drone operator was never located.

The incident was listed as Category A by the UK Airproc Board which means it was at ‘serious risk of collision’.

The drone measured around eight inches across so it was too small to be picked up by air traffic control.

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It was spotted my medics, and the pilot then alerted air traffic control.

The report said: ‘The board considered that the reported range was such that this was a situation where a collision had only been narrowly avoided and chance had played a major part.’

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Image not found or type unknown

The crew were heading back to Cambridge after flying an 11-year-old boy to Royal London Hospital when the incident occurred.

Aviation consultant Paul Beaver todl the Mail on Sunday: ‘A collision between even a small drone used for taking photographs and a helicopter could be catastrophic.

‘A drone would be big enough and heavy enough to penetrate the Plexiglas screen of the cockpit, which is only designed to withstand rain, sleet and hail or a collision with a small bird.

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‘It would be catastrophic if it hit the tail rotor system and a potential serious danger if it hit the main rotor. This highlights the problem with drones.’

A spokeswoman for the East Anglian Air Ambulance said: ‘We can confirm that, in accordance with aviation regulations and procedures, a pilot reported a drone in his proximity on August 26, 2016.

‘The Duke of Cambridge was not on shift when the drone incident took place. There are strict rules that drone operators must follow and it is important they are aware of their responsibilities for safe operations at all times.’

It was reported earlier this year that the prince will give up his pilot duties this summer to become a full-time royal.

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