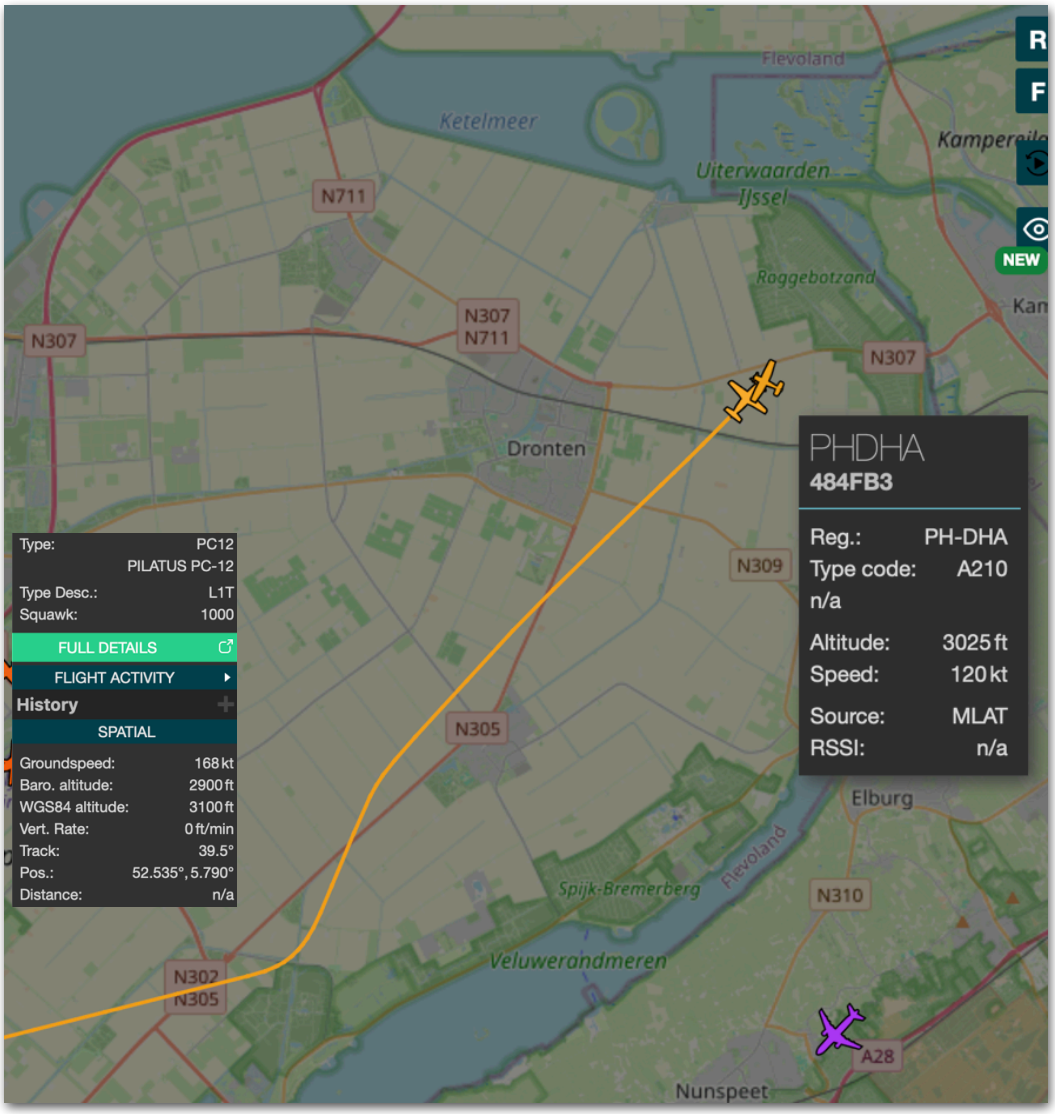
AIRPROX BETWEEN VFR AND IFR TRAFFIC

AIRSPACE HAZARDS - INSTRUMENT APPROACHES -



The Aquila A210 was conducting a VFR flight direct EHLE-EHLE, departing via BRAVO and routing towards Biddinghuizen and MIKE. After BRAVO the aircraft climbed towards 3000 ft.

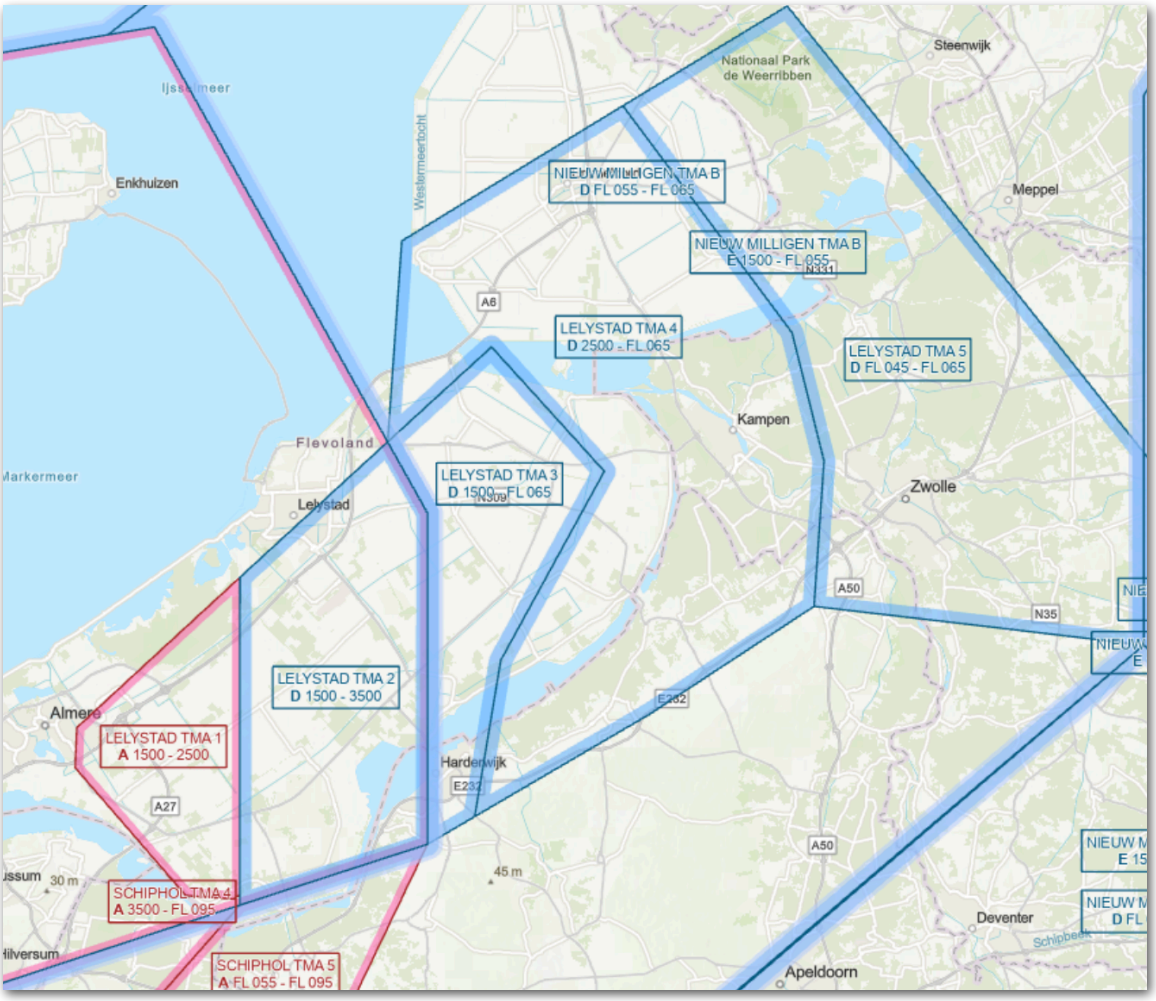
East of Dronten near KUVOS, the Aquila converged with a Pilatus PC-12, operating IFR from Schiphol (EHAM) to Lelystad (EHLE) which was cleared for the RNP RWY 23 approach via ASBES and KUVOS.

Following the occurrence, we conducted an internal safety analysis using publicly available information, including ATC audio and ADS-B Exchange flight-tracking data. The ADS-B data indicated an estimated vertical difference of approximately 125 ft at the closest point.

Disclaimer: This is an internal safety-learning exercise, not an official accident investigation. The information available to us has limitations, and the analysis should not be regarded as a complete or certified reconstruction of the event.

THREE THINGS TO CONSIDER

1. Airspace



The Lelystad ENR 2.1 lists TMA 3 and TMA 4 as Class D. However, this information must be read together with AIP Sup 03/2022, which introduces a time-dependent classification:

TMA	Vertical band	Airspace class BTN 1700-2100 (1600-2000) [1]	Airspace class BTN 2100-1700 (2000-1600) [2]
Lelystad TMA 3	1500 FT AMSL - FL 065	D	E
Lelystad TMA 4	2500 FT AMSL - FL 065	D	E

[1] BTN 1700-2100 (1600-2000) contact Lelystad Arrival 134.530.
[2] BTN 2100-1700 (2000-1600) FIS provided by Dutch MIL Info 132.350.

At the time of the incident, 14:24 UTC, the PC-12 was in contact with Lelystad Arrival (134.530), while the Aquila was in contact with Dutch MIL Info (132.350). The aircraft were therefore communicating with different ATS units on different frequencies.

Based on the time and location of this occurrence, both aircraft were operating in Class E airspace.

1.1 Flight operations in Class E:

- IFR aircraft receive ATC service and are separated from other IFR traffic.
- VFR aircraft are not provided with separation from IFR traffic.
- Traffic information is provided to VFR aircraft as far as practicable.
- VFR pilots must not assume that ATC will provide separation or timely warnings in every situation.

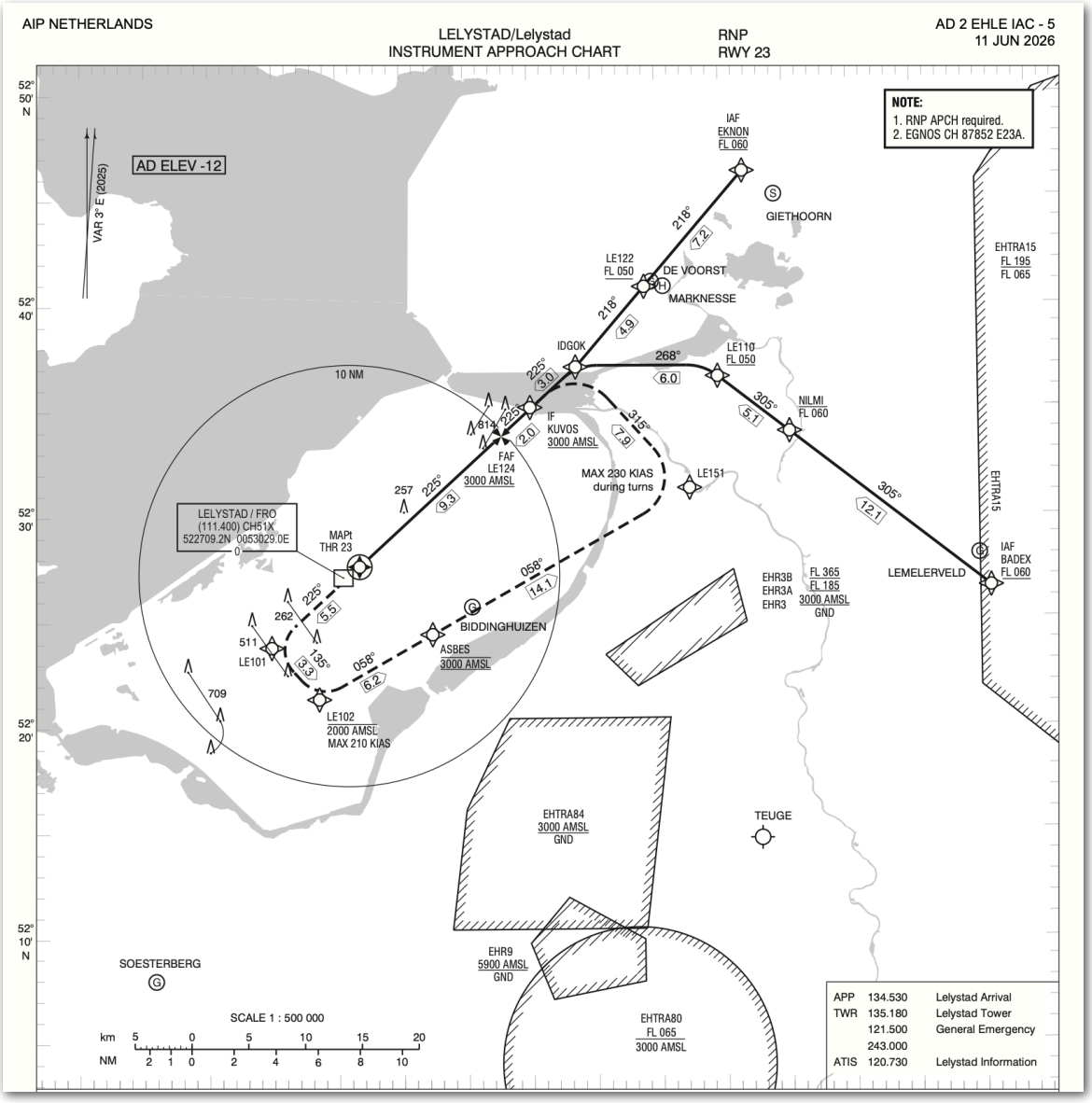
VFR and IFR aircraft can occupy the same airspace without ATC being responsible for separating them.

2. IFR traffic flows

The current EHLE AIP contains an explicit caution under EHLE AD 2.23:

"Pilots are urgently requested not to execute VFR flights in the vicinity of the published instrument arrival and departure routes within the Lelystad CTRs and TMAs."

Although this is not a prohibited-area designation, it is a warning and should carry considerable weight in our flight planning decisions.



Reference: EHLE AD 2.24 Instrument approach chart RNP RWY23

2.1 Identifying hotspots

Hotspot Area	Traffic hazard
KUVOS/ East Dronten	RNP approach traffic, between 2000 ft - 3000 ft
Extended centrelines	IFR traffic established on the final-approach track / missed approach routes
BRAVO / Biddinghuizen	VFR arrival/departure/transiting traffic, IFR traffic and winch-glider activity
MIKE	VFR arrival/departure/transiting traffic



This ADS-B traffic density heatmap shows aircraft activity below 4000 ft AMSL (EHLE center).
Gliders and aircraft without compatible transmissions are not included.

3. Limitations of see-and-avoid

This occurrence reminds us that see-and-avoid has its limitations. Even an effective visual scan cannot guarantee 100% traffic detection. Spotting another aircraft is not always easy and can be affected by factors such as:

✈ Relative bearing remaining almost constant ✈ Small apparent aircraft size ✈ Sun glare and reduced contrast ✈ Aircraft structure and blind spots ✈ Nose-up attitude during climb ✈ Visual fixation inside the cockpit ✈ High cockpit workload.

In good flying weather, sun glare and reduced contrast against the background can make other aircraft difficult to see.

CREATE YOUR SAFETY BARRIERS

Safety Barrier	Recommended Practice
Visual lookout	Systematic scanning, check blind spots during climbs and turns and avoid prolonged cockpit fixation.
Conspicuity	Use landing lights (when appropriate and in accordance with aircraft limitations.)
Sun awareness	Consider sun position during planning; wear appropriate sunglasses and make sure the canopy is clean.
Electronic awareness	Use compatible traffic displays where available but understand their limitations and incomplete coverage*.
Radio	Maintain appropriate communication and request traffic information from the relevant ATS unit when useful and available.
Route planning	Avoid the vicinity of published IFR routes wherever practicable. It is **not** recommended to use IFR waypoints for VFR navigation. They are often located on the boundaries of controlled airspace or as part of instrument approach/departure procedures - potentially generating a conflict or infringement risk.
Altitude planning	Consider published IFR procedures and local traffic flows when selecting an altitude.
Instruction	Include local airspace and traffic threats in every flight briefing (including discovery flights).

* Electronic conspicuity should be regarded as an additional safety barrier, not a replacement for visual lookout. Not every aircraft will appear on a traffic display, and displayed information may be incomplete or delayed.

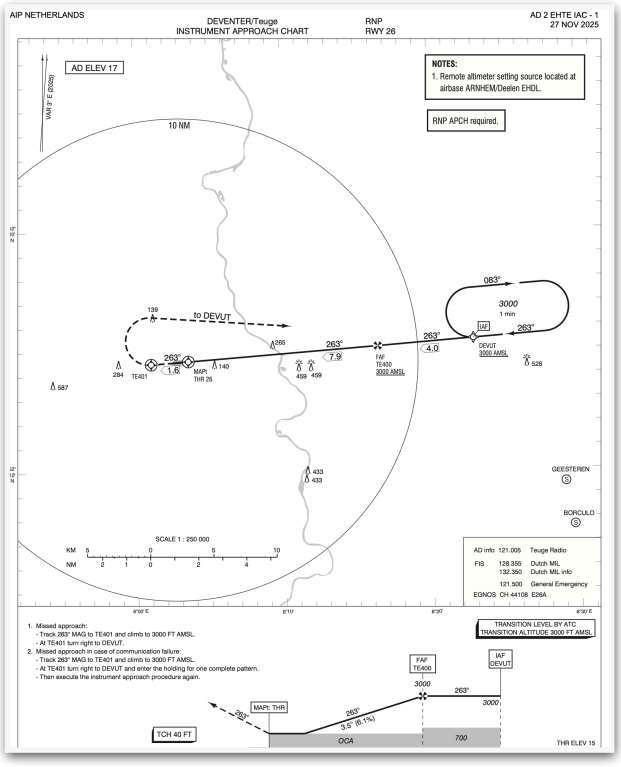
CONCLUSION

VFR traffic operating near aerodromes outside controlled airspace should be aware that there may be IFR traffic using instrument approach procedures and should avoid crossing them at similar altitudes to that of the procedure, unless talking to the relevant ATS unit.

The published IFR approach and departure routes, together with the cautions in the AIP, are useful tools when making flight-planning decisions.

Having multiple safety barriers in place can help reduce these risks and make our flying safer.

✈ **Did you know?** Some uncontrolled aerodromes in NL have instrument approach procedures.



AD2 EHTE Instrument Approach Chart RNP RWY26

Safety Incident or hazards? Every report helps us identify risks, learn and improve our safety.

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