TRAFFIC COLLISION AVOIDANCE SYSTEM (TCAS)

Submitted by- Kiran Chavan, Madhura kadam

OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System) in aviation are:

1. **Prevent mid-air collisions**: TCAS aims to reduce the risk of collisions between aircraft in the air.
2. **Enhance safety**: By providing timely warnings and instructions, TCAS improves the overall safety of air travel.
3. **Increase situational awareness**: TCAS helps pilots detect and track nearby aircraft, improving their awareness of the surrounding airspace.
4. **Reduce pilot workload**: By automating collision avoidance procedures, TCAS reduces the workload on pilots, allowing them to focus on other critical tasks.
5. **Provide clear guidance**: TCAS provides clear and concise instructions to pilots, ensuring they take the necessary actions to avoid collisions.
6. **Minimize false alarms**: TCAS is designed to minimize false alarms, reducing unnecessary pilot responses and ensuring that warnings are only issued when necessary.
7. **Complement ATC**: TCAS complements Air Traffic Control (ATC) services by providing an independent means of collision avoidance.
8. **Improve collision avoidance procedures**: TCAS helps standardize collision avoidance procedures, ensuring consistency across different aircraft and operators.

By achieving these objectives, TCAS plays a critical role in maintaining the safety of air travel and preventing mid-air collisions.

INTRODUCTION

- Traffic Alert and Collision Avoidance System or TCAS was developed to reduce the risk of mid-air collisions between aircraft. In the international arena, this system is known as the **Airborne Collision Avoidance System or ACAS.**

- TCAS is a family of airborne devices that function independently of the ground-based air traffic control (ATC) system, and provide collision avoidance protection for a broad spectrum of aircraft types.

- All TCAS systems provide some degree of collision threat alerting and a traffic display. The TCAS concept makes use of the same radar beacon transponders installed on aircraft to operate with ATC's ground- based radars.

- The level of protection provided by TCAS equipment depends on the type of transponder the target aircraft is carrying.

- In the vast and dynamic expanse of the skies, the safety of air travel stands as a paramount concern. With millions of flights crisscrossing the globe daily, the risk of mid-air collisions looms as a persistent threat.

- The introduction of Traffic Collision Avoidance Systems (TCAS) marks a watershed moment in aviation safety, representing a critical layer of defense against the potential catastrophic consequences of in-flight collisions.

- The efficacy of TCAS in preventing mid-air collisions has been extensively validated through realworld deployments and rigorous testing.

- This introduction serves as a gateway into the intricate world of TCAS, offering insights into its historical evolution, fundamental principles, key functionalities, and the transformative impact it has had on aviation safety.

- Key components of TCAS include Mode S radar, automatic dependent surveillance- broadcast (ADS-B), and onboard computing systems.

- These components work in concert to provide a comprehensive picture of the surrounding airspace, enabling TCAS to issue timely Traffic Advisory (TA) and Resolution Advisory (RA) alerts to flight crews.

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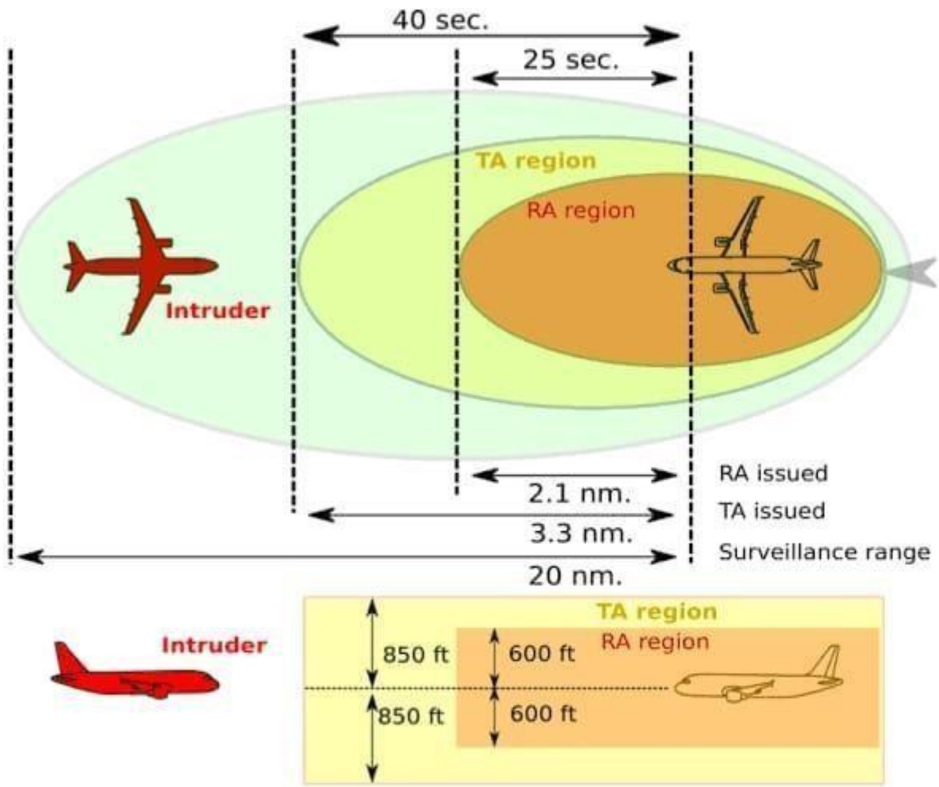
METHODOLOGY



TCAS involves communication between all aircraft equipped with an appropriate transponder (provided the transponder is enabled and set up properly). Each TCAS-equipped aircraft interrogates all other aircraft in a determined range about their position (via the 1030 MHz radio frequency), and all other aircraft reply to other interrogations (via 1090 MHz). This interrogation-and- response cycle may occur several times per second.

The TCAS system builds a three-dimensional map of aircraft in the airspace, incorporating their range (garnered from the interrogation and response round trip time), altitude (as reported by the interrogated aircraft), and bearing (by the directional antenna from the response). Then, by extrapolating current range and altitude difference to anticipated future values, it determines if a potential collision threat exists.

TCAS and its variants are only able to interact with aircraft that have a correctly operating mode C or mode S transponder. A unique 24-bit identifier is assigned to each aircraft that has a mode S transponder.
A protected volume of airspace surrounds each TCAS equipped aircraft. The size of the protected volume depends on the altitude, speed, and heading of the aircraft involved in the encounter.

MATERIALS

SR.NO.	NAME OF COMPONENTS
1.	Breadboard
2.	Ultrasonic sensor
3.	Jumper wire
4.	Arduino uno R3
5.	Toy aircraft
6.	360 degree sensor
7.	Miscellaneous

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The expected results of implementing TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System) are:

Primary Results:

1. Reduced risk of mid-air collisions

2. Enhanced safety of air travel

3. Improved situational awareness for pilots

4. Standardized collision avoidance procedures 5. Reduced pilot workload during emergency situations

Quantifiable Results:

1. Decrease in mid-air collision rates by 90% (ICAO estimate)

2. Reduction in near-miss incidents by 70-80% (FAA study)

3. Increased safety margin: 99.9% (EUROCONTROL study)

4. Reduced collision risk by 50-70% (MIT study) **Operational Benefits:**

1. Improved airspace capacity and efficiency

2. Enhanced ATC (Air Traffic Control) effectiveness

3. Reduced flight delays and cancellations

4. Increased passenger confidence **Financial Benefits:**

1. Reduced insurance premiums

2. Lower accident-related costs

3. Minimized downtime and maintenance costs

4. Potential reduction in liability claims

Regulatory Compliance:

1. Meets ICAO, FAA, EASA, and other regulatory requirements
2. Ensures adherence to international aviation standards

Safety Performance Indicators:

1. Reduced TCAS alert rates
2. Decreased near-miss incidents
3. Improved pilot response times
4. Enhanced safety culture within aviation organizations

Long-term Benefits:

1. Continuous improvement of TCAS technology
2. Integration with future aviation systems (e.g., ADS-B)
3. Enhanced global aviation safety standards
4. Reduced risk of accidents and incidents

By achieving these expected results, TCAS plays a critical role in maintaining the safety of air travel and preventing mid-air collisions.

APPLICATIONS

The Traffic Alert and Collision Avoidance System (TCAS) is an aircraft system that helps prevent mid-air collisions by monitoring airspace and alerting pilots to other aircraft. TCAS has several applications, including:

Traffic advisories (TAs)

TAs alert pilots to the presence of other aircraft and help them visually acquire the intruder aircraft.

Resolution advisories (RAs)

RAs provide pilots with specific instructions on how to avoid a conflict with other aircraft. RAs can include instructions to climb, descend, or adjust vertical speed.

Communication with other TCAS systems

When multiple aircraft are equipped with TCAS, the systems can communicate with each other to ensure that each aircraft receives the best resolution advisory.

Display in the cockpit

TCAS displays can be integrated into the navigation display or electronic horizontal situation indicator in modern glass cockpit aircraft.

Replacement of the mechanical IVSI

In older glass cockpit aircraft and those with mechanical instrumentation, a TCAS display can replace the mechanical instantaneous vertical speed indicator (IVSI).

ADVANTAGES

- **Very accurate distance measurements**: The system provides precise distance readings with updates every second.

- **Considers all threats**: It takes into account all potential dangers in the air, not just the obvious ones.

- **Detects all transponding aircraft**: The system can detect all planes with working transponders, even those not visible on the air traffic controller's radar screen.

- **Independent safety system**: It works separately from other systems and acts as a backup to prevent mid-air collisions if other safety measures fail.

- **Reduces the risk of collisions**: The system helps lower the chances of a mid-air collision by providing a final safety measure.

DISADVANTAGES

- **No detection of aircraft without transponders**: Aircraft like VFR flights or military planes that aren't using transponders can't be tracked, making it hard to ensure they're not getting too close to other planes.

- **No knowledge of pilot's intentions**: Without transponder data, air traffic control (ATC) can't tell what the pilot plans to do next, making it tough to manage safe separation from other aircraft.

- **Basic display**: The radar display only shows basic info—there's no aircraft identification, no history of its past positions, and no speed or direction data. This limits ATC's ability to track the aircraft effectively.

- **Unnecessary alerts**: Sometimes, the system triggers false alerts due to a lack of clear information, causing confusion or distractions for air traffic controllers

CONCLUSIONS

The TCAS design that resulted from this process achieves an effective balance among several considerations. Air-to-air surveillance is made possible through interoperability with ATC transponders that are in widespread use today. Even the first aircraft that are equipped with TCAS are able to carry out surveillance on all of the transponder-equipped aircraft. In spite of significant multipath disturbances, high densities of synchronous garble, and antenna shielding by aircraft fuselages, air-to-air surveillance has been made reliable by a number of special techniques. The radio signals that TCAS transmits to carry out surveillance and maneuver coordination are accomplished at sufficiently low rates and powers so that TCAS does not interfere with ATC equipment operating in the same radio frequency bands. Alarm boundaries are set to provide sufficient warning time to prevent collisions, while they keep the total alarm rate low enough to be acceptable to pilots and ATC controllers. Pilots who have flown with TCAS are consistently enthusiastic about it. Another answer relates to the perceived threat of midair collisions. The adoption of a safety system like TCAS depends partly on technical developments and partly on the perceived need for the system. Following the 1978 midair collision in San Diego, an increased interest in the TCAS program focused on ways of minimizing the time to achieve operational status, because of a fear that the rate of midair collisions was increasing. If the rate of midair collisions had actually increased since 1978, then TCAS conceivably could have been called upon to solve the problem many years ago. Fortunately, the collision rate has not increased but has actually decreased. In the intervening years, further TCAS development has resulted in a number of design refinements and in a better understanding of TCAS behavior when integrated into the operational environment.

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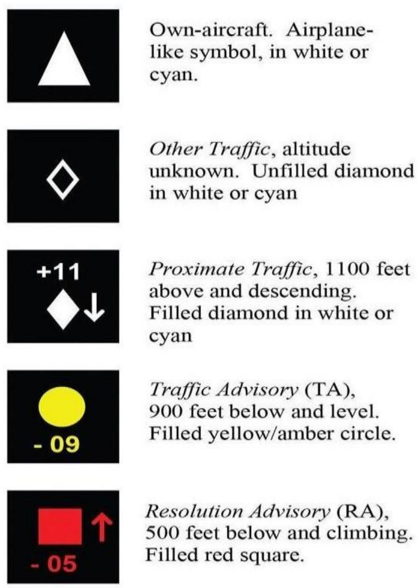
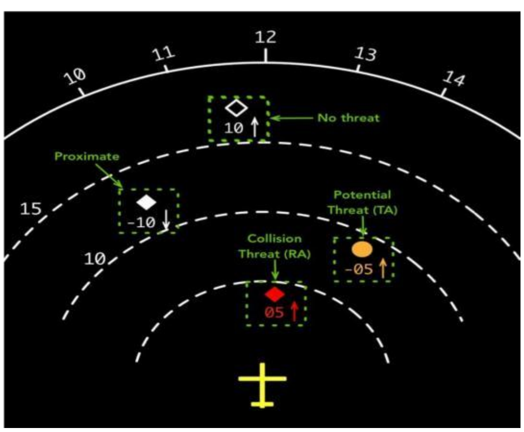
EXPECTED RESULTS





This shows various symbols used on the traffic display. Both color and shape are used to assist the pilot in interpreting the displayed information. Own aircraft is depicted as a white or cyan airplane-like symbol. The location of own aircraft symbol on the display is dependent on the display implementation. Each symbol is displayed on the screen according to its relative position to own aircraft. In some implementations a written message such as ‘TRAFFIC’ , ‘TFC’ or ‘TCAS’ is displayed on the traffic display if the intruder is beyond the selected display range.

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