

MEDIA STATEMENT

15 June 2010

CAA RESPONDS TO AOPA'S LEGAL ACTION THREATS

Midrand – The South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) has noted, with regret, an article that appeared in today's (Tuesday, June 15, 2010) edition of The Citizen. The article purports that the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) intends to file court papers against the SACAA at the North Gauteng High Court this morning in an attempt to overturn flying restrictions placed on the 'general aviation' industry (i.e. small and non-scheduled aircraft operations) around and over stadiums during FIFA World Cup games. The same threat was also made by AOPA in an article published by Business Day in yesterday's edition. Thus far, the SACAA has not received any such court papers.

The issuing of the recent NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) containing flying restrictions came about as a result of the security risk assessment done by security authorities. As such, the NOTAM should be viewed in terms of its intended objective, which is solely to enhance and assist in safeguarding national security.

Regardless, in instances such as this, the SACAA continuously engages relevant entities and authorities with the aim of determining the necessity and relevance of restrictions. As such the NOTAM in question is being evaluated on a continuous basis.

As with any other democratic situation, there will always be a group of people that may hold a different view to that of the majority; the current NOTAM is no exception. However, the SACAA is comfortable with the fact that as a guiding principle it has always been open to discussions in order to ensure that any potential differences in opinion with its stakeholders can be addressed.

The SACAA is entrusted with maintaining a safe and secure aviation environment. In achieving this mandate, certain critical decisions will be made in the interest of protecting the citizenry and regrettably may not be ideal for a few. Hence we appeal to the aviation community to make this small sacrifice in the interest of national security.

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About the SACAA:

The South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) was established on 1 October 1998 following the enactment of the South African Civil Aviation Authority Act, No.40, in September of the same year. The SACAA promotes and maintains a safe, secure and sustainable civil aviation environment, by regulating and overseeing the functioning and development of the industry in an efficient, cost-effective, and customer-friendly manner according to international standards.

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