

**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**December 2012**

**SACAA urges the industry to uphold safety and security standards  
over the festive period**

*Midrand.* The South African Civil Aviation Authority today announced that 2012 has been a safer year in terms of fatalities resulting from aircraft accidents in the civil aviation space. Ultimately the mandate of the SACAA is to ensure that there is no loss of life resulting from activities in the civil aviation industry and according to statistics, even though there was a slight rise in the number of accidents from January to November compared to the same period in 2011, there has been a decline in the number of fatalities in the same period. According to statistics, there were 29 fatalities compared to 36 in 2011, between January and November, whilst there were 19 fatal aircraft accidents compared to 14 in the same period. This means that even though there were more accidents, fewer people died as a result of those accidents. “The festive season is generally a very busy period for flying and therefore I would like to urge the flying community to practice caution and adhere to safety standards during this period” said Poppy Khoza, Acting Director of Civil Aviation. “Generally, flying is known to be the safest mode of transport and we encourage our industry to uphold this record as we work towards protecting the lives of our passengers”, says Khoza.

The objective of reducing aircraft accidents by half by 2014 remains a target for the rest of the South African civil aviation industry. However, this target can only be achieved if the industry adheres to the required safety and security standards as prescribed in the Civil Aviation Regulations. Nevertheless, the regulator wishes to share with the public the successes achieved by the SACAA in 2012 in supporting the objective of achieving safer skies in this country. From a safety perspective, the regulator enforced the implementation of new regulations which were synchronised to be in line with the Civil Aviation Act, Act No. 13 of 2009. These new regulations came into effect on 1 August 2012. The regulator conducted workshops in three major areas country-wide, to assist industry with the correct interpretation and implementation of these new regulations and therefore ensure a smoother transition from the old to the new.

The SACAA hosted a successful 6<sup>th</sup> National Safety Seminar where a vast array of safety issues was discussed and many safety programmes launched, which resulted from interventions identified in 2011. The industry led many of these safety initiatives with the full support of the regulator.

From an aviation security perspective, the SACAA participated in two international audits by the Transport Security Administration of the USA and Australian Department of Transport in July and August 2012 respectively. In both, the SACAA demonstrated that South Africa is recognised as one of the best regulators in the world. The SACAA walked away with no findings in one of these audits whilst settling for observations in another.

Sadly, the civil aviation industry suffered the closing down of two airlines, namely Velvet Sky and 1Time airline. This is an unfortunate situation for the civil aviation industry; one which we hope will not be repeated. However, we congratulate the recent arrival of a new low-cost airline, Fly Go Air, and wish it well, especially during the festive season.

Some of the highlights of 2012 for the SACAA include the successful implementation of Flight Plan 2012 which came into effect on 15 November 2012. We are pleased to advise that the requirements of Amendment 1 to International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Document 4444 have been fully implemented within the South African airspace. At present South Africa is receiving and transmitting flight plans in the new format successfully. The SACAA was also involved in the process of finalising the phasing out of Chapter 2 Aircraft. This phase-out rule demands that specific old generation aircraft which are brought into this country from other states where they have generally been phased out are prevented from entering our airspace, and all this is done in the interests of safety.

A safety hazard which was increasingly becoming a nuisance to our pilots was the use of laser beams to blind pilots on approach at airports in areas such as Cape Town, Durban and Lanseria. The regulator, in partnership with ATNS, CSIR and ALPA launched an awareness campaign to educate the public on the dangers of shining laser beams on pilots. The continued use of laser beams on pilots can have devastating consequences for the industry and anyone found to be engaging in this activity will face prosecution by the authorities.

As we close 2012 on a positive note, the SACAA urges all industry players, especially those who will be engaging in flying, to exercise caution by adhering to all Civil Aviation Regulations. In times like these, we are all encouraged to go back to the basics and do proper planning before flying. For all the take-offs that take place, the SACAA is calling for equal landings. For

our passengers, we request that we abide by the aviation security regulations by adopting safe flying habits. Observe the required weight on your luggage and hand baggage taken into the cabins, and please adhere to the Liquid Aerosols and Gels requirement for all planned international flights.

“On behalf of the Board and management of the South African Civil Aviation Authority we wish all South Africans safe travel during the festive season, and a prosperous 2013” concluded Khoza.

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***About the SACAA:***

The South African Civil Aviation Authority (“SACAA”) is a juristic body established in terms of the Civil Aviation Act, 2009 (Act No. 13 of 2009) (“the Act”). SACAA is governed and controlled by the Civil Aviation Authority Board (“the Board”). In terms of mandate, the SACAA is tasked with promoting and maintaining 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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