



MEDIA STATEMENT

08 April 2014

Man arrested for forging a South African commercial pilot license

Midrand, Johannesburg, 08-04-2014. A Congolese national has appeared before the Kempton Park Magistrate Court on charges of forging a South African commercial pilot's license. His arrest follows an anonymous alert to the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA).

Preliminary investigations have revealed that the 33 year old man allegedly used the forged South African commercial pilot's license to get a revalidation of a commercial pilot license which was issued by the Democratic Republic Congo's Civil Aviation Authority.

The man was arrested in Kempton Park whilst trying to conduct a simulator training in order to keep his fraudulent DRC-issued commercial pilot's license valid.

"The SACAA is working closely with the DRC Civil Aviation Authority in order to ensure that this unscrupulous individual, and any other like him, does not get to sit in the cockpit anytime soon. It is selfish and callous individuals such as this one that taint the virtuous reputation of the aviation industry; built by devoted and trusted aviators. We hope that at the end of this process he is made to face the full might of the law and that others can learn about the dire consequences of this sort of criminal behaviour," said SACAA's Director of Civil Aviation, Ms Poppy Khoza.

If convicted; the accused could face a monetary penalty of up to R50 000.00, or a ten year imprisonment term, or both penalties.

According to Khoza, the SACAA's dedicated personnel are doing laudable work in rooting out corruption and unethical behaviour in the civil aviation industry.

Ninety-five (95) cases were administered between January 2013 and March 2014 compared to 73 during the preceding calendar year and 32 in 2011. Besides opening criminal cases against some of the culprits, other penalties included the withdrawal of aircraft certificates of airworthiness as well as medical certificates. Other lawbreakers were issued with penalty notices and warning letters, whilst others had their various licences, certificates or approvals suspended, or downgraded, or cancelled.

Culprits ranged from air traffic controllers through to pilot's licence holders, air operating certificate holders, aircraft maintenance organisations, aviation training schools, aircraft maintenance engineers, aviation security regulated agents, and airport licence holders.

Khoza appealed to members of the public and aviation industry to report any unbecoming civil aviation behaviour to the SACAA. This can be done confidentially through the SACAA's Tip-offs Anonymous facility, 0800 997 263 (free call) or sacaa@tip-offs.com, and the Confidential Aviation Hazard Reporting System (CAHRS) cahrs@caa.co.za or 011 545 1453 (fax) or 011 545 1242 (telephone).

She further lauded the whistle-blower and many others who cooperate with the Authority in bringing these matters to the attention of the SACAA.

"The effort and support from the public and members of the aviation industry is laudable. We truly relish the cooperation and would like to record our undertaking that the SACAA will leave no stone unturned in pursuit of preserving aviation safety and the lives of the flying public. We hope this case sends a clear message to other unprincipled individuals that the SACAA will not tolerate any form of unethical conduct by any member of the aviation community or our personnel. With the high number of accidents, we have no choice but to rid the aviation industry of these assassins disguised as aviators," said 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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