

MEDIA STATEMENT

15 July 2015

The SA Civil Aviation Authority pulls the plug on Working on Fire operations

Midrand. As of Tuesday, 14 July 2015, the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) has suspended the Part 127 (Helicopter) and Part 135 (Air Transport Operations: Small Aircraft) Air Operating Certificates (AOC) of Working on Fire, trading as FFA Aviation (Pty) Ltd, for failure to comply with the legislative requirements applicable to AOC holders.

Following a recent spate of incidents and accidents involving aircraft operated by FFA Aviation, the SACAA had intensified its oversight and audit obligations to determine whether aviation safety was being compromised in any way by this operator and maintenance organisation. The SACAA's intensified audits were conducted parallel to the ongoing accident investigations, which are being conducted by the Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation Division under the banner of the Department of Transport.

As the regulator of civil aviation safety and security the SACAA conducts annual safety audits on, among others, all AOC holders. Similarly to all audit processes, a sample of the operations is audited and where there is a need, ad-hoc or follow-up inspections are also conducted to ensure that all areas of concern are addressed appropriately.

Recent surveillance conducted on FFA Aviation yielded various findings, which according to the SACAA, were serious in nature. Notwithstanding, in terms of the regulations, the operator is entitled to appeal the suspension decision by applying to the Director of Civil Aviation. However, in the meantime, the decision remains enforceable.

In line with the applicable civil aviation regulations, an AOC holder has a duty to ensure that the organisation operates safely and its aircraft are properly maintained in line with the manufacturer's manual and applicable regulatory prescripts.

The mandate of the SACAA is to regulate civil aviation safety and security and to promote industry development. The Authority is committed to meeting its obligations and keeping South Africans and those that use its airspace safe. Unsafe operations undermine the growth and prosperity of the aviation industry, as well as the country's highly regarded civil aviation safety and security standards. The basic principles of airmanship should always

be upheld, and aviation safety and security must always be prioritised ahead of gains, commercial or otherwise!

-ENDS-

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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