

MEDIA STATEMENT

26 August 2020

Three down and on to the next!

SA Civil Aviation Authority gratified with calibration work done to date

Johannesburg – With two of the key South African airports’ navigational instruments successfully calibrated to date, the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) is pleased with the progress achieved thus far.

In total, three sites have been calibrated, and these comprise OR Tambo International Airport’s two instrument landing systems (ILS’s), Standerton’s Very High Frequency Omni-Directional Range (VOR), and Cape Town International Airport’s VOR and ILS’s.

“The multinational crew, which includes our own Civil Aviation Authority flight inspectors are working hard, and with diligence, to attend to the calibration tasks, especially those that required urgent attention. More still needs to be done to catch up on this work and this will require a hands-on approach by the SACAA all the way, to ensure that the work is completed as per the agreement, schedule, and safety requirements. This means that the SACAA team must first be satisfied with the work carried out before they can sign off the project as completed,” said Ms Poppy Khoza, who heads the SACAA as Director of Civil Aviation, the equivalent of a CEO.

According to Khoza, calibration can be a very challenging task that requires mental resilience, and for the crew to remain alert when performing the same task of precarious flying patterns over and over again, to cross-check a particular navigational aid system until such time that precision is achieved beyond a doubt.

The calibration mission commenced on Saturday, 22 August 2020 and the crew managed to successfully calibrate the two (2) instrument landing systems (ILS’s) at OR Tambo International Airport by Sunday, 23 August 2020, thereby bringing both systems back to service.

The aircraft departed for Cape Town on Monday, 24 August 2020. On their way to the Western Cape, the crew first calibrated Standerton’s VOR, and Cape Town International Airport’s VOR system upon arrival at the city.

The crew has just completed all the necessary work at Cape Town International Airport. Next, they will head for George Airport to work on the airport's ILS, VOR, and Distance Measuring Equipment (DME) system. Thereafter, the aircraft will make its way to KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) to carry out work at King Shaka International Airport.

In line with South African and international civil aviation regulatory prescripts, the crew's work will be occasionally intercepted by temporary halts as a result of the team taking the mandatory crew rest periods.

As per the approved schedule, the crew shall ensure coverage of all areas that require urgent attention. "This is clearly going to be an intense mission all the way and could take the crew up to the end of September 2020 to complete. The SACAA will give an update once the missions have been completed, which may be several weeks from today," Khoza concluded.

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Issued by the South African Civil Aviation Authority

About the SACAA:

The South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) is a Schedule 3A public entity reporting to the Department of Transport established in terms of the Civil Aviation Authority Act, 2009 (Act No 13 of 2009) (the Act). 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. The SACAA is governed and controlled by the Civil Aviation Authority Board.

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