

MEDIA STATEMENT

27 MAY 2010

CAA LIFTS RESTRICTIONS ON LANDING AT GEORGE AIRPORT DURING WET CONDITIONS

Word count: 309 (headline included)
For immediate release

Midrand – The South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) has lifted the NOTAM (restrictions) on the use of George Airport runway during wet conditions. This move follows tests that were witnessed by the SACAA's Airports team on Tuesday (25 May) to determine the compliance of the newly resurfaced runway.

"This is certainly a welcome move for all concerned, especially following what was undoubtedly a trying time. The decision to lift the NOTAM was reached last night following a thorough assessment of friction and surface texture testing results," said the SACAA's Gawie Bestbier, General Manager: Air Safety Infrastructure.

According to Bestbier, the friction results were good and met the International Civil Aviation Organisation's standards. As part of the water drainage test, the previously problematic areas of the runway were flooded to determine the effect that the new runway surfacing has on the runway surface drainage characteristics. Due to the improved runway macro texture and levelling, water is now successfully dissipated via the open graded surface texture and to the side of the runway.

"The past several months, whilst working on this project, turned out to be a valuable learning curve for our team and stakeholders. More so as we soon discovered that there appears to be inconclusive global knowledge with respect to the exact relationship between runway friction and surface texture in terms of the nett effect on aircraft braking performance. The process has instantly led to South Africa being counted amongst the worldwide experts on the subject. We would not have gotten this far had it not been for the cooperation and support of all stakeholders, particularly the CAA's investigation team, ACSA, its contractors and the airlines," explained Bestbier.

Meanwhile, the Authority has issued a new NOTAM on George Airport which informs pilots of the new state of the runway.

-ENDS-

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.

For more information contact:

Kabelo Ledwaba
Manager: Communications
South African Civil Aviation Authority
Tel. + 27 11 545 1511
Cell: + 27 83 451 2654
Email: ledwabak@caa.co.za
Website: www.caa.co.za

Or

Phindiwe Gwebu
Senior Manager:
Marketing & Corporate Communications
South African Civil Aviation Authority
Tel: +27 11 545 1086
Cell: +27 83 461 6070
E-mail: gwebup@caa.co.za
Website: www.caa.co.za