



SSN

Soaring Society of Namibia

1.0 IDENTIFIED HAZARD

During the 2022/23 international competition season, the following hazards were identified, based on reports received from ANS:

- 1.1 Lack of radio communication from glider pilots when called upon by pilots from powered aircraft.
- 1.2 Concerns from pilots of powered aircraft regarding possible mid-air collisions or near misses.

In terms of the Safety Management System (SMS) of the SSN, these hazards were noted and discussed at the SSN Annual General Meeting of January 2023, and it was resolved that further action be taken by the QASO of the SSN in cooperation with Mr. J Wiehahn in his capacity as consultant.

2.0 RISK ANALYSIS

It was determined that the identified hazard constituted a risk. To properly analyse the risk, it necessitated identification of the root cause.

Three root causes were identified namely, lack of clear understanding by pilots of powered aircraft of the reporting regimens pertaining to the various classes of airspace, ambiguity in the AIP regarding reporting requirements and last, but not least, cockpit work overload of glider pilots required to switch and listen to a multitude of varying radio frequencies in flight.

Although the risk of near misses or mid-air collisions always prevail and is not limited to gliders, given the low air-traffic density within the Namibian airspace, the probability of the risk has been analysed as "remote." However, the severity of a near miss and more specifically, a mid-air collision is analysed as being "catastrophic."

In terms of the risk analysis matrix, it rates the risk as **3A**.

3.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

A rating of **3A** places the risk in the “intolerable” region of the risk matrix, necessitating mitigation methods.

4.0 MITIGATION

Consequent to this assessment, representatives from the SSN attended a meeting, hosted by the NCAA Safety Office, on 08 February 2023 where these risks were discussed. It was resolved that the SSN engage with ANS to discuss the various issues and to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the NCAA (ANS) and the SSN to mitigate the risks in anticipation of the forthcoming international soaring competition.

The above resulted in the meeting of 03 March 2023 which was attended by representatives of the SSN and the NCAA (ANS). It was resolved that a MoU as referred to above be workshopped and once agreement has been reached, a draft document to be forwarded to all stakeholders for comment.

The workshop involving the SSN and the NCAA (ANS) was conducted on 30 May 2023 and a draft document was compiled. In essence, this document streamlines radio procedures pertaining to the various classes of airspace, specifically in class E, allocating squawk codes and clearly identified radio frequencies and establishing transponder mandatory zones.

The draft MoU was circulated to all stakeholders and feedback resulted in additional refinement. The final document was signed by the SSN on 12 September 2023.

Additional mitigation measures include:

- Posting of the MoU on the SSN website with the instruction to all members to acquaint themselves with its contents.
- Pre-season briefing to all SSN members located at the operational bases.
- NCAA (ANS) to create awareness of the contents of the MoU as well as the ATC procedures pertaining to the various classes of airspace among non-gliding pilots in Namibian airspace.
- Regular attendance of Inter Operator Safety Meetings (IOSMs) by representatives of the SSN.

- Regular monitoring of the effectiveness of the MoU during the international competition season scheduled for 01 November 2023 to 31 January 2024.
- Debriefing and discussion of the effectiveness of the MoU at the post season SSN AGM including assessment of any newly identified hazards and risks as well as possible issues of refinement.

Safety is of paramount importance to the SSN and in terms of its mandate to oversee all safety related aspects of its operations in accordance with its MoP and its NAMCAR Part 149 ARO approval, hazards and concomitant risks will be monitored consistently, and the necessary internal disciplinary actions be initiated against all transgressors.

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