

	REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA SOUTH AFRICAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY GENERAL NOTICE: GENERAL EXEMPTION RELATING TO PART 91.04.10 OF THE CIVIL AVIATION REGULATIONS, 2011 AND PART 91.04.10 OF THE CIVIL AVIATION TECHNICAL STANDARDS	SACAA Private Bag X 73 Halfway House 1685
Tel: (011) 545-1275 MhlangaS@caa.co.za		DATED: 12 MARCH 2026

**NOTICE OF APPROVAL OF A GENERAL EXEMPTION FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE
CIVIL AVIATION REGULATION PART 91.04.10 AND 91.04.10 OF THE CIVIL AVIATION
TECHNICAL STANDARDS.**

1. Purpose of this General Notice

The Director of Civil Aviation is issuing the General Notice to the industry as empowered by Part 11.01.3 of the Civil Aviation Regulations, 2011 (CARs). This notice serves to communicate a decision taken by the Director of Civil Aviation on the provisions of the CARs and Civil Aviation Technical Standards (CATs) that relate to the Flight Data Recorder (FDR) requirements to be installed in aeroplanes below 5,700 kg and helicopters below 3,175 kg.

The Director of Civil Aviation has approved the operators of aircraft below 5,700 kg and helicopters below 3,175 kg, to operate without having to comply with the requirements of CAR 91.04.10 and CATS 91.04.10, while an amendment to the existing regulation is being developed.

This decision will remain in place from the date of signature of this general notice for a period of 12 months or until the applicable amendment to the Regulations has been promulgated, whichever occurs first.

2. General

Most of the aeroplane below 5700kg and helicopters below 3175kg are configured with an analogue avionics' suite. For the installation of the FDR and FDR light systems, a digital avionics suite is required. This would require total reconfiguration of aircraft, Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) for the installation, STC for the Avionics suite, FDR and FDR retrofit, labour, wiring, etc.

The FDR installation is a complex integration with aircraft systems, which requires certified avionics and data buses, additional wiring and equipment. This could significantly affect the weight and power requirements for the lighter weight aircraft. It is not considered to be optimized for small aircraft or helicopters.

The Principle of Data: The need for reliable flight data remains constant, regardless of the jurisdictional boundary of the operation (domestic vs. international). Differentiating the requirement based purely on geographical boundaries compromises the principle of data integrity essential for effective safety management and continuous improvement.

The primary concern is the overt regulatory acceptance of a Safety-Cost trade-off. Relieving the FDR requirement for domestic operations will severely hamper the State's ability to conduct accident investigations to determine the root cause of accidents and incidents within our own sovereign airspace.

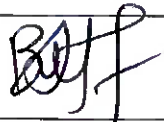
In this regard, the SACAA will establish a working group to assess the viability of enforceable, low-cost recording solutions, and prepare the subsequent regulatory amendments to CAR 91.04.10 and CATs 91.04.10.

3. Decision by the Director of Civil Aviation

The Director has granted an exemption from the requirements of Part 91.04.10 and CATs 91.04.10 for a period of 12 months to establish a working group to assess the viability of enforceable, low-cost recording solutions, and prepare the subsequent regulatory amendments. These include:

- Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) lightweight cockpit voice/data recorders;
- A class C Airborne Image Recorder (AIR) or AIRS which shall record at least the flight path and speed parameters displayed;
- An Aircraft Data Recording System (ADRS) which shall record at least the first 7 parameters;
- Innovative flight data capture solutions that can provide equivalent flight data to legacy systems but at a significantly lower cost; and
- Focus on the Principle of Data Capture, shifting focus away from linking compliance to the specification of particular legacy hardware but the principle of safety data capture.

The SACAA reserves the right to amend the decision contained in this notice should circumstances dictate the necessity thereof. **Please note:** If there are any regulatory changes, this notice will be subject to a review.

Issued by the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA)		
	Ms. POPPY KHOZA	13 MAR 2026
SIGNATURE OF DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION	NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS	DATE