

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2 September 2026

SACAA STATEMENT ON THE AIRLINK FLYPAST AT THE DHL CAPE TOWN STADIUM

Ikhaya Lokundiza, Centurion – The South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) can confirm that it is looking into the flypast that took place on Saturday 29 August 2026 ahead of the international rugby fixture between the Springboks and the All Blacks teams.

Subsequent to the flypast, the SACAA began ongoing compliance verifications and can confirm the following information to date:

Airlink submitted three applications for flypasts related to the rugby matches of which the flypast under discussion is the second of the three applications. The applications were submitted in line with the regulatory provisions governing non-passenger or cargo-carrying flights conducted in terms of the provisions of Part 91.06.32. Following the SACAA approval, the first flypast took place on 22 August 2026 in Johannesburg, and the second one took place on 29 August 2026.

In relation to the second flypast, the operator submitted the application with supporting documentation applicable to such operations. The necessary processes including the practice flight in a simulator in preparation for the Saturday flight and a safety briefing was conducted ahead of the operation as required by the regulations. This was approved by the Regulator, in line with the requirements for Special Air Events.

Following various discussions in the media relating to the events of the past weekend, the SACAA initiated compliance verifications, engaged the operator, obtained the Flight Data Recording downloads as well as other additional requirements.

The Regulator has begun its analysis process and has requested additional information from the operator to reach an informed position.

A full report with recommendations will be shared with the operator once the assessment has been completed by the SACAA.

Further to this, the Regulator was notified by the operator on Wednesday, 1 September 2026, that it is withdrawing its application for approval for a third flypast that was planned for this coming weekend.

The SACAA, as the safety net of the South African skies, gives the public the assurance that aviation safety and security compliance will always remain paramount and is not negotiable.

South Africa has one of the most sought-after aviation talents in the world and as a country we remain proud of the 0% record in fatal accidents in the commercial airline operations space for over four decades.

This is a record we intend to uphold well into the future, and it is therefore critical that we interrogate this past weekend's events with clear minds and data at our disposal to determine if there were any safety concerns which warrant a review, as we seek to continuously strengthen our safety standards.

Our State is ranked seventh globally and first in Africa for our aviation safety standards by the International Civil Aviation Organization, a United Nation's specialised agency on civil aviation safety and security. This is achieved with a culture of compliance and a South African aviation industry that prioritises aviation safety and security.

ENDS

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