

# THE NATIONAL AVIATION CONFERENCE 2026

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# Introduction — AIID Mandate

AIID's mandate is anchored in ICAO Annex 13 and the Civil Aviation Act.

Functionally, AIID reports to the Minister of Transport through the Deputy Director General: Civil Aviation.

Administratively, AIID reports to the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA).

Investigating aviation accidents and serious incidents to determine causes and prevent future occurrences.

Recording and analysing safety data to identify trends and potential hazards.

Managing the Confidential Aviation Hazards Reporting System (CAHRS).

Issuing and tracking safety recommendations to prevent accident recurrence.

Advocacy and collaboration with industry and government to promote a positive safety culture.

## ACCIDENTS FELL.

▼ 43% — Lowest in 5 years

## FATALITIES ROSE.

▲ Quadrupled from 4 to 17 in the last 12 months

Lowest crash count in five years — yet the highest fatality toll since 2021.

**76 Accidents**

2<sup>nd</sup> Lowest Accidents ever recorded

**>6 accidents  
per  
month**

**17 Fatal  
Accidents**

▲ Exponential increase

**24  
Fatalities**

**22%  
Fatal Rate**

Increased from 3%

# Accident (Airline and Scheduled Sector)

## ACCIDENT RATE

**0.0%**

per 100 000 hrs flown  
(Airline & Commercial)  
2025/26

Last Fatal Airline Accident on  
SA soil >59 years

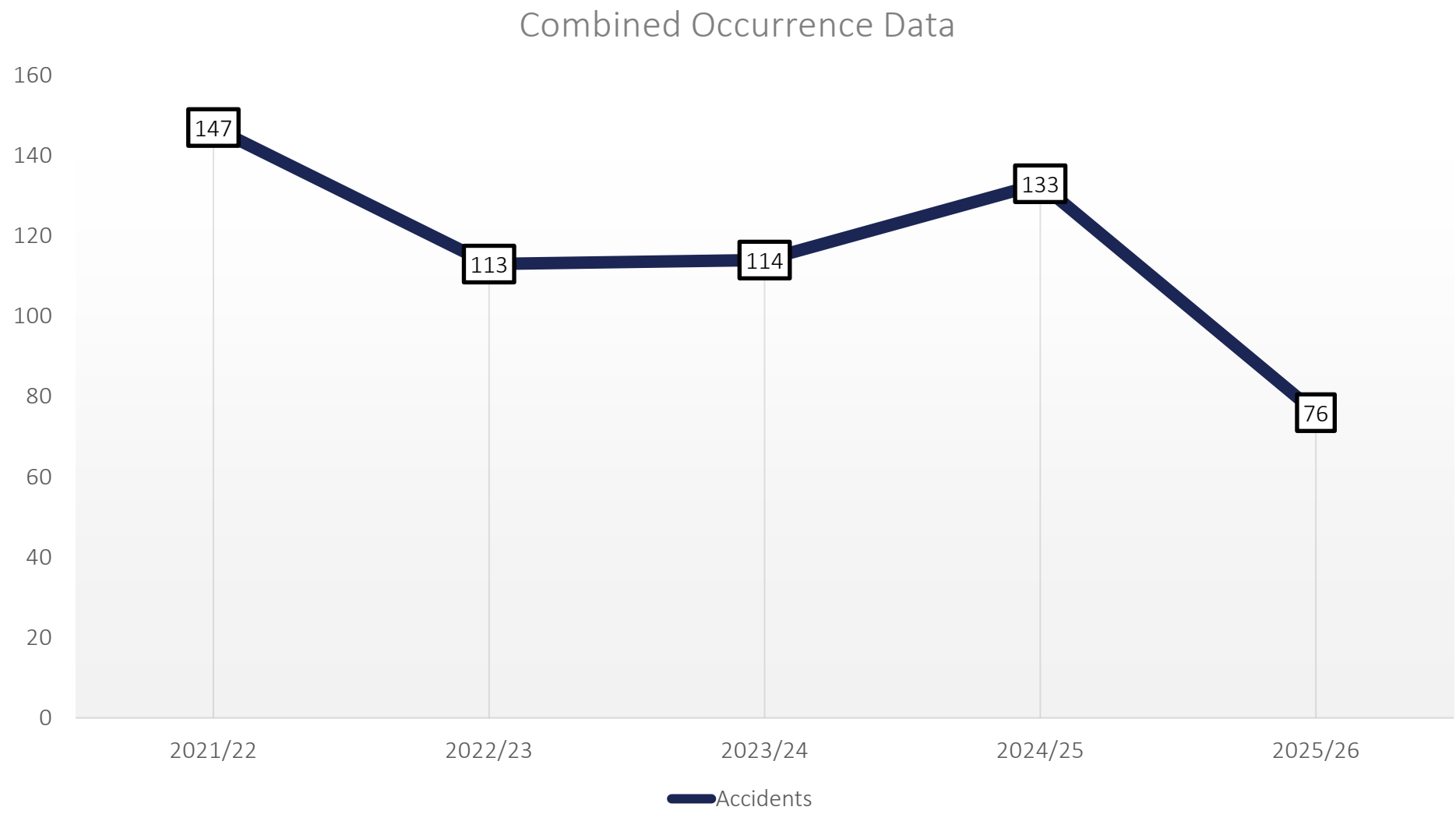
Last Fatal Airline Accident involving  
SA operator  
>39 years

8 Serious Incidents

0 Fatal Accidents

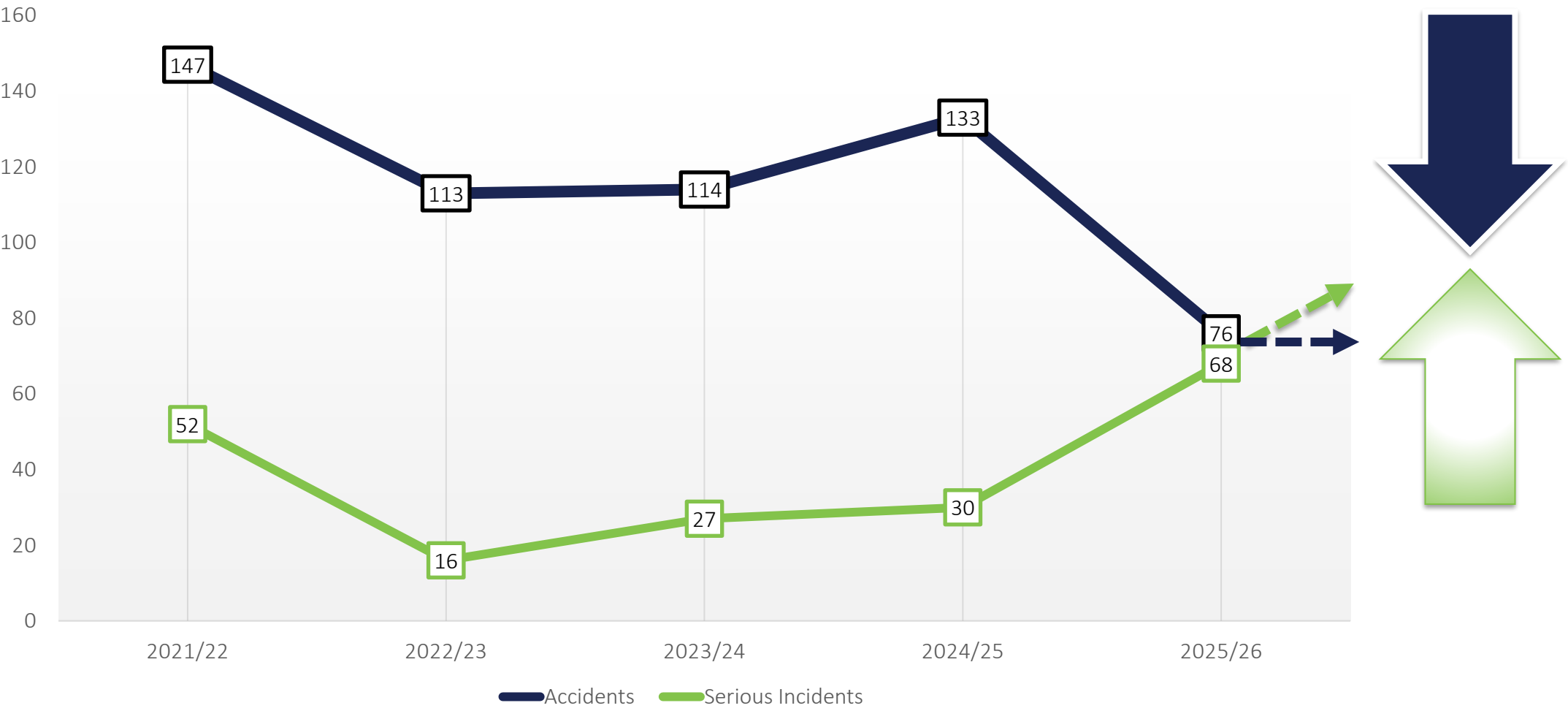
0 Accidents

# General Aviation Manned Aviation Occurrences



# General Aviation Manned Aviation Occurrences

Combined Occurrence Data



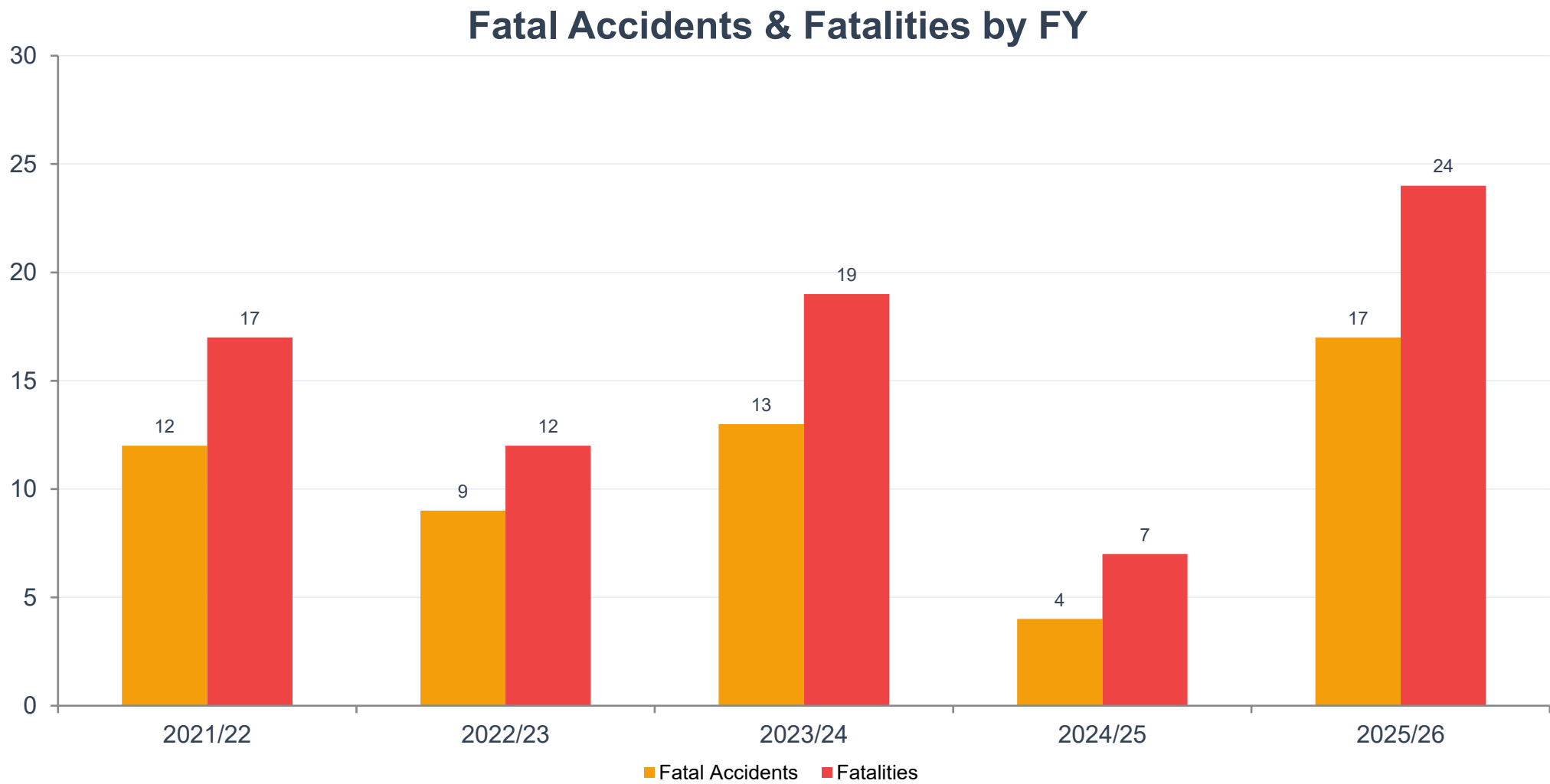
# Accidents Per Operations Category

| Operations Category                                               | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | Trend |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|-------|
| Agricultural Work Operations                                      | 10      | 6       | 13      | ▲     |
| Air Transport (>19 pax / Part 121)                                | 0       | 0       | 0       | —     |
| Air Transport Small Aeroplanes (Part 135 (<20 pax Air Transport)) | 2       | 0       | 0       | —     |
| Aviation Training Organisation                                    | 30      | 26      | 19      | ▼     |
| Commercial Helicopter Operations                                  | 2       | 2       | 0       | ▼     |
| General Aviation (Part 91/94)                                     | 27      | 36      | 19      | ▼     |
| Operation of Non-Type Certified Aircraft                          | 41      | 62      | 25      | ▼     |
| General Maintenance Rules                                         | 0       | 1       | 0       | —     |
| Parachute Operations                                              | 2       | 0       | 0       | —     |
| Grand Total                                                       | 114     | 133     | 76      | ▼     |

❑ Non-Type Certified Aircraft and GA continue to be the highest-risk categories.



# 5-Year Recorded Accidents, Fatal Accidents & Fatalities



# International Benchmarking (calendar)

International Comparison of AIID RSA Number of Accidents



Fatal Accident Average(%)

South Africa

~11%

Australia

~11%

Canada

~12%

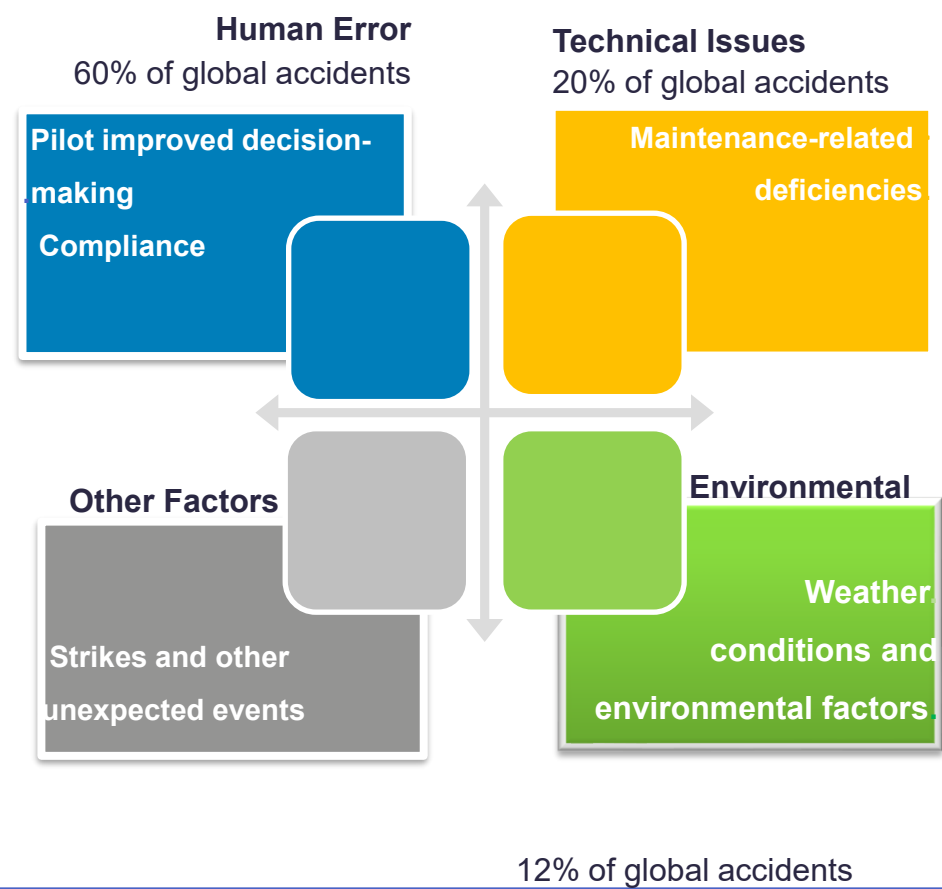
❑ South Africa's fatal accident average remains on par with peer states. However, absolute improvement is required given the 2025/26 surge in fatal accidents.

# Operations Safety-Serious Incidents

| Serious Incident Category          | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Part 121 (>19 pax — Air Transport) | 0       | 1       | 6 ▲     |
| Part 135 (<20 pax — Air Transport) | 4       | 8       | 2 ▼     |
| Aviation Training Organisation     | 13      | 4       | 19 ▲    |
| General Aviation (Part 91/94)      | 4       | 9       | 17 ▲    |
| Non-Type Certified Aircraft        | 4       | 8       | 21 ▲    |

❑ While airline accident rate remains zero, the surge in Part 121 serious incidents (0→1→6) warrants focused monitoring and intervention.

## Global Perspective



## AIID Top Causal Factor Breakdown



❑ Human factors (flight crew/pilot) remain the dominant cause, reinforcing the need for targeted training interventions.

# Case Study: Case Study: Airmanship- Cross cutting

AIID Investigations: ZS-CZU | ZS-HFH | ZU-PBD — Compared with ZS-OJU (Hansie Cronje)

## ZS-CZU | SA | Jun 2025

**Aircraft:** Piper PA-28-180  
**Operation:** General Aviation and Operating Flight Rules (Part 91)  
**Weather:** Severe weather warnings issued for KZN; formation departed Virginia Airport despite warnings  
**Outcome:** IMC encounter; ZS-CZU crash-landed in sugarcane near Greytown (2 survived). Sister aircraft ZS-KFB destroyed; 3 fatalities incl. student pilot  
**Key Factor:** Departure despite active severe weather warnings; spatial disorientation

## ZS-HFH | SA | Jun 2025

**Aircraft:** Robinson R44 Raven II  
**Operation:** Agricultural (Commercial Helicopter Part 137)  
**Weather:** Calm winds from the north-north-east, temperature 3 °C, dew point 1 °C. Night departure (0202Z) from Metsi Berries Farm, Modimolle-Mookgopong, Limpopo  
**Outcome:** Accident ~600m from departure area; investigation ongoing. Preliminary report published.  
**Key Factor:** Night VMC / visual illusion risk; operational pressure in agricultural context

## ZU-PBD | SA | Oct 2025

**Aircraft:** Sling 2 (Non-Type Certified / Part 94)  
**Operation:** Private flight; ATO-operator aircraft. Secunda to Margate.  
**Weather:** VMC at departure; conditions deteriorated over KZN Midlands mountainous terrain  
**Outcome:** MAYDAY relayed via airline pilot; wreckage found near Boston, 4 924 ft elevation; pilot fatally injured  
**Key Factor:** VMC-into-IMC over rising terrain; student-level endorsement (SPL); inadequate weather risk assessment

## ZS-OJU | SA | JUNE 2002

**Aircraft:** Hawker Siddeley (748)  
**Operation:** Cargo Operations (Part 121)  
**Weather:** Poor weather conditions with low cloud and over Outeniqua Mountainous terrain  
**Outcome:** 3 fatalities; Loss Situational awareness; controlled flight into terrain.  
**Key Factor:** Continuation bias; operator's inadequate SMS oversight; intermittent ILS of rwy 29 and unserviceable aircraft instruments.

## CROSS-CUTTING LESSONS — What the Data and Investigations Tell Us

### Terrain & VMC-into-IMC

VMC at departure does not guarantee VMC at destination. Rising terrain (KZN Midlands; Santa Monica Mtns) accelerates VMC-to-IMC transitions that pilots cannot reverse in time.

### Pre-flight Go/No-Go Culture

Active weather advisories were available but did not result in go/no-go decisions. Formal risk assessment tools (FRA forms) were completed but did not reflect actual risk levels.

### Continuation Bias

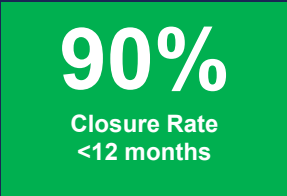
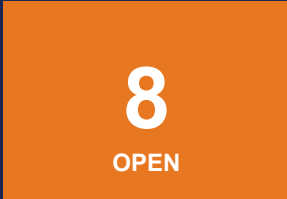
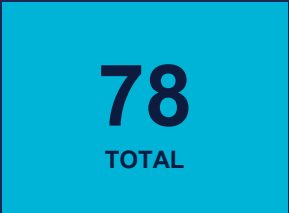
Pilots in all four cases pressed on into deteriorating conditions rather than diverting. The decision to continue was made incrementally, not as a single moment of judgment.

### Operator Oversight & SMS

Inadequate SMS as a contributing cause. Oversight systemic gap requiring targeted recommendations.

# Safety Recommendations

- ❑ Regulatory improvements and oversight are well-established tools for reducing accidents worldwide. The majority of safety recommendations are accordingly addressed to the State of Operator including SACAA.



(01 Apr 2021 – 31 Mar 2026)

## 2025/26 FY

- ❑ 19 safety recommendations issued during 2025/26 financial year.

## Status of the 8 Open Recommendations

- ❑ 7 are within the 90-day response window addressees still within prescribed timeframe.
- ❑ 1 response received AIID awaiting further information for effective implementation.



## Lifecycle: Issued → Response → Evaluated → Closed

- ❑ An unimplemented recommendation is a systemic hazard left unremedied. AIID tracks all open recommendations and reports on the progress.

# Key Takeaways & Way Forward



## Accident Reduction

**A significant, positive trend MUST BE SUSTAINED**



## Serious Incidents Rising Sharply

**Increased reporting strengthens early risk detection and enables proactive safety intervention.**



## Fatal Accident Surge

**Strengthen Safety Management Systems in GA Operations & Enhance**



## Airline Operations — Monitor Part 121 Serious Incidents

**Category 3 and 4 events are trending upward, prompting enhanced monitoring and the development of targeted action plans.**



## Causal Factor Focus

**Human factors, driven largely by suboptimal decision making.**



## Way Forward

**Continue heightened Safety Recommendation management and implementations**

# Thank You

*Keeping You Safe in the Sky*