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MAA ADVISORY LETTER – Glider Continuing Airworthiness Management Organization

Issue

1. Over the past 21 months, the MAA has been working closely with your Glider Continuing Airworthiness Management Organization (CAMO) but progress towards CAMO Approval has been slow. The MAA has closely monitored CAMO activity through numerous on-site visits (including an initial approval audit in Nov 13) and regular correspondence with CAMO staff. Throughout this period, a number of Corrective Action Requirements (CARs) have been raised, with extensions being granted to associated Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) and CAR deadlines due to CAMO resource being involved in the Glider recovery programme¹. Recently, at the request of your MOD Continuing Airworthiness Manager (MOD CAM), the CAMO approval audit scheduled for Jun 15 was cancelled.
2. During the most recent visit by my Continuing Airworthiness Approvals Team to RAF Syerston², it was confirmed that all work on the Glider Continuing Airworthiness Management Exposition (CAME) has ceased due to staff effort being prioritised to support the Viking and Vigilant recovery programmes³. As a result, the fulfilment of CAMO tasks has been significantly reduced; I also note the findings of the last 22 (Trg) Gp IQA⁴ which indicated many CAMO activities had stalled due to essential CAMO personnel being diverted from Continuing Airworthiness (CAw) roles in direct support of contractor recovery activities.
3. I am concerned this lack of CAw management has the potential to manifest as an increase in RtL for those Vigilant gliders now cleared to fly. This situation could be exacerbated as the operating fleet expands with additional Vigilant gliders from the Serco GMS recovery programme and Viking aircraft from the Southern Sailplanes recovery activity^{5,6}. The MAA are also aware of an upcoming Framework Agreement for Technical Support (FATS) contract to recover a considerable number of Viking gliders (~54), potentially before Apr 16. It is further noted that with your endorsement and associated risk assessment, Southern Sailplanes are currently operating

¹ As a result of the pause in flying as reported within DHAN 086.

² 10–12 Jun 15. Aim of visit to close out Serco Glider Maintenance Section (GMS) Corrective Action Reports (CARs) to enable the granting of an unconstrained MRP Part 145 MAOS Approval.

³ Included as an observation in the corresponding MAA MRP Part 145 MAOS report for MAA_15_MAOs_1501_1 Surveillance Audit dated 01 Jul 15.

⁴ 22 (Trg) Gp IQA report GLD 2015/1.

⁵ Glider MOD CAM Engineering Glider Recovery Priorities email dated 16 June 2015 17:57.

⁶ Serco GMS Form 2 dated 29 Jun 15 proposing an expansion of the Serco MRP Part 145 MAOS Approval to include RAF Topcliffe and RAF Kirknewton as additional Line and Base locations.

under an MAA Waiver⁷ which expires 30 Sep 15; the MAA have not been made aware of any activity to progress a MAOS approval or request a further review of this waiver.

4. Evidence to support this potential increase in RtL has been substantiated during recent audit actions by my CAw Approvals Team whilst closing out a Serco Glider Maintenance Section (GMS) CAR⁸. Errors with the issue and control of the Vigilant Recovery Routine Technical Instruction⁹ were discovered whereby 2 different versions of the same document (both with the same release date) were in circulation. Whilst this is for the Project Team to resolve, pro-active management of this type of technical information is a core CAMO task.

5. Accordingly, and in light of the seriousness of the overall situation, this MAA Advisory Letter is being issued to formally record the position and requires specific action to address the delays in achieving CAMO approval. Previous correspondence from 22 (Trg) Gp CAE¹⁰ details CAMO resource allocation with associated recovery timelines that are not considered acceptable to the MAA (CAME submission to the MAA NLT 11 Dec 15). It is acknowledged that recent 22 (Trg) Gp CAE direction¹¹ may improve CAME production and CAMO approval timelines.

Action Required

6. You are required to produce a resourced CAP to address the delays in achieving CAMO approval; this CAP is to be provided to the MAA by 05 Oct 15. The CAP should document how and by when 2 FTS intends to satisfy fully the requirements of the RA 4900 series of regulations, adequately resource CAMO activity and also include a route map to achieving CAMO approval. It should articulate clearly the activity required, together with suitable owners and timescales to address each action. Delivery of this CAP will be monitored by the MAA through engagement with your MOD CAM.

7. Due to the planned expansion of the Viking and Vigilant Glider fleets and supporting Serco GMS maintenance activity, it is the expectation of the MAA that the Glider CAMO will be ready to undertake a CAMO approval audit by 04 Dec 15. In addition, you are reminded of the requirement¹² for the MOD CAM to present evidence of a full annual assurance cycle prior to the audit.

Timing

8. Urgent. Action required by 05 Oct 15.

Summary

9. The Glider CAMO has demonstrated a significant lack of progress towards Approval and the associated control of Glider CAw activity through implementation of defined CAMO tasks. Given the expected expansion of the Glider fleet and the potential for increased RtL, there is an urgent need for you to review the situation and produce a CAP to address the shortcomings regarding CAME progression, fulfilment of CAMO functions and CAMO Approval. Failure to comply with this Advisory Letter within the timescales given may lead to further sanction.

⁷ MAA AWE_2015_034.

⁸ UK.MAA.MAOS.1501.CAR 16 dated 5 Jan 15.

⁹ RTI/VIGILANT/035D.

¹⁰ 22Trg Gp-FT CAE(ODH) email dated 29 July 2015 10:33.

¹¹ 22TrgGp-FT CAE(ODH) Glider CAME and Assurance email dated 25 August 2015 12:36.

¹² MAA/O&A/Mgt/CAMO/LFE dated 01 Nov 13.

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