

## STATEMENT

### European business aviation response to AAIB's Sala accident report conclusions

13 March, 2020 (Brussels/London). The following response can be attributed to the European Business Aviation Association (EBAA), the British Business and General Aviation Association (BBGA) and The Air Charter Association (The ACA), following the publication of the Sala accident report conclusions by the UK's Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB).

"EBAA, BBGA and The ACA note the findings of the aircraft accident report published by AAIB into the crash that claimed the lives of Emiliano Sala and David Ibbotson, the pilot flying the plane, on 23 January 2019.

"Our thoughts are with the victims' families and loved ones involved in this tragic and avoidable accident.

"Regrettably, the conclusions have raised the issue of illegal charter flights. Amongst other contributing factors, it appears the aircraft was operated without the appropriate licences and approvals to do so.

"For decades, EBAA, BBGA and The ACA have been heavily involved in educating the business aviation community, the public and authorities about the risks of illegal charter flights. Despite these efforts, there remains a small, but a significant number of aircraft owners who ignore the law and carry passengers illegally.

"EBAA, BBGA and The ACA will intensify their efforts to fight against the issue of illegal charter flights. This practice threatens passenger safety and gives legitimate providers a bad name, while undermining their financial viability.

- We will organise a series of dedicated workshops across Europe for operators, brokers and authorities to accelerate knowledge and best-practice sharing.
- We will roll-out new tools to empower passengers and the business aviation community to look up charter operators, access factsheets, and report questionable operations.

"The focus needs to shift to establishing clarity on what defines a private operation and a commercial operation. Compounding the concern, is a lack of clarity on the definition of an illegal charter, but also on who has what responsibility when operating or booking flights.

"The challenge lies in explaining the complexities of the industry to prospective customers. Should customers have any questions or concerns; they should contact:

- the [European Business Aviation Association](#)
- The [Air Charter Association](#)
- their local business aviation association, such as [BBGA](#) in the UK
- their local authorities

"EBAA, BBGA and The ACA call on governments worldwide to take the issue of illegal charter flights more seriously and make additional resources available to actively prosecute offenders who flout the law. There needs to be far higher sentences, more substantial fines, the removal of pilots' licences and seizure of aircraft for those people who, despite knowing the law, operate as if they weren't subject to any of it.

"EBAA, BBGA, The ACA and their members are committed to upholding the aviation industry's highest safety standards and codes of practice for passengers and crews alike. We will continue to sound the alarm and educate regulators, the industry and public, at all levels, of the risks and dangers of these fraudulent activities."

-ENDS-

## Media Contacts

- **The ACA:** Dave Edwards, [ceo@theaircharterassociation.com](mailto:ceo@theaircharterassociation.com), +44 207 118 7557
- **EBAA:** Frederique Luca, [fluca@ebaa.org](mailto:fluca@ebaa.org), +32 479 660 813
- **BBGA:** Alison Chambers, [alison.chambers@emeraldmedia.co.uk](mailto:alison.chambers@emeraldmedia.co.uk), +44 7721 882939

**About The ACA:** The Air Charter Association (The ACA) is a worldwide organisation founded in 1949 in London's Baltic Exchange, whose membership is open to those involved within the Aviation Industry, engaged in the chartering of aircraft. The objectives of The Air Charter Association have always, and continue to be, to promote the highest standards of professionalism and ethics within the Aviation Industry. The Association continues to fight for the rights of over 250 members around the globe as well as providing networking opportunities for members to grow their businesses. Members including Charter Brokers, Passenger and Cargo Airlines, Business Jet Operators and a number of leading supporting providers to the industry. Follow us on Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook. [www.theaircharterassociation.aero](http://www.theaircharterassociation.aero)

**About EBAA:** The European Business Aviation Association (EBAA) is the leading organisation for operators of business aircraft in Europe. Our mission is to enable responsible, sustainable growth for business aviation, enhance connectivity and create opportunities. EBAA works to improve safety standards and share knowledge, to further positive regulation and to ease all aspects of closely tailored, flexible, point to point air transportation for individuals, governments, businesses and local communities in the most time-efficient way possible. Founded in 1977 and based in Brussels, EBAA represents +700 members companies, corporate operators, commercial operators, manufacturers, airports, fixed-based operators, and more, with a total fleet of +1,000 aircraft. Follow us on Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook, or visit our website on [www.ebaa.org](http://www.ebaa.org)

**About BBGA:** BBGA is the UK's national trade body representing business and general aviation. Now in its 46th year, (formerly known as GAMTA) its member companies span all facets of the business aviation sector. BBGA is headed by Chair Aoife O'Sullivan and CEO Marc Bailey. BBGA represents +175 companies, including airports, corporate flight departments, operators, aviation services organisations and aircraft manufacturers. In a partnership with EBAA, all members of BBGA enjoy dual membership of both associations. Similarly any UK-based organisation seeking to join EBAA should do so via BBGA. BBGA is based at Dorton, Aylesbury, Bucks.