

São Paulo, February 20, 2017

OPEN LETTER

To: Department of Civil Aviation (SAC); ANAC; DECEA; CENIPA; Federal Prosecutors; Federal Police; Public Security Bureau of the State of São Paulo and Public Security Bureau of the State of Rio de Janeiro.

Subject: the danger of unmanned balloons for aviation in Brazil

Dear Sirs,

Brazil right now faces an imminent great tragedy, a disaster of shocking proportions and shameful repercussion for our nation around the world.

We're on the verge of witnessing a major air crash over urban areas, with potential hundreds of fatalities on board and on land, all due to the indifference with which our nation treats the growing danger of "party balloons", also called "unmanned balloons" or "hot air balloons".

The airline pilots have been a lone voice in the crusade against the impending disaster but we find no echo and the danger increases everyday.

Last weekend, in a single Saturday morning, over than 10 balloons invaded the final approach to Guarulhos Airport, in Sao Paulo, representing a major threat to safety of foreign and Brazilian aircraft.

Audio files recorded by TrafegoAereo.com website reveal the surprise of foreign pilots, as well as the consternation of Brazilian airmen while flying across hundreds of pounds of metal and cloth in the most critical moments of the flight – the landing and the takeoff.

In 2016, more than 300 balloons were reported to our aeronautical authorities (not to mention many others not recorded officially).

The downgrading of Brazilian airspace by the International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) provided some hope of improvement for the near

future, but authorities have not shown enough concern and little has happened to mitigate the problem— at least not at the speed that this potentially catastrophic situation requires. Things have only worsened since then.

As members of the Hot Air Balloon Danger Committee - a branch of the Brazilian Air Crash Investigation Board (CENIPA); we have urged fellow airmen to always report balloon sightings. We have also been alerting the authorities constantly, as well as the media through ABRAPAC and other aviation entities, and we have recommended possible solutions.

There is an urgent need to set up:

1. Official contingency procedures for air traffic controllers and pilots in case of imminent danger posed by hot air balloons near airports.
2. Special investigation and crime-fighting units to inhibit this illegal practice in the cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

We emphasize that strong and concrete actions must be taken immediately.

In addition, we pilots, can only "hope" or "pray" for the hundreds of giant balloons released every day in Brazilian airspace to pass away from our aircraft paths.

If a tragedy occurs, with hundreds of fatalities, society may never know who released the killer balloon. But we will all know, for sure, who let it happen.

Best regards

The Brazilian Civil Pilots Association (ABRAPAC)