

Imminent risk: the danger of unmanned balloons for Brazilian aviation

The National Flight Crew Union (SNA) once again makes public the attention to a very serious problem that is putting at risk the aviation safety in Brazil: the release of festive or unmanned balloons. The presence of these artifacts in the skies of the country, and especially around the airports, can cause a great aerial tragedy.

Only in one morning this past weekend, more than ten balloons threatened the safety of domestic and foreign aircraft in the final approach of Guarulhos Airport, in São Paulo.

The situation is very serious, as can be seen in the audios of the following link, published by the website trafegoaereo.com.br, which show the perplexity of foreign and Brazilian pilots with the sighting of balloons in critical moments of flight: [link](#).

In addition to working together with the SAC (Secretariat of Civil Aviation) and various authorities in a group seeking solutions to mitigate the risk of ballooning in aviation, SNA also took the opportunity to send a letter not only to SAC but also to ANAC, DECEA, CENIPA, Federal Public Ministry, Federal Police and Public Security Secretaries of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, the concessionaires of airports and airlines warning of the imminent risk of an accident.

In 2016, more than 300 balloons were reported to the Brazilian aeronautical authorities – not counting the countless who were not officially registered.

The downgrading of Brazilian airspace by IFALPA (International Federation of Air Line Pilots Associations), which took place in 2016, initiated some actions, especially by the initiative

of the SNA and the class, to address the problem. However, the speed of the authorities in implementing effective policies against the balloons is not enough and the problem only grows.

Immediately, the SNA requests the pilots to report all sightings so that the responsible authorities have a database to try to do a control, and as a contingency measure we recommend suspending operations at the airport and closing the airspace at places where there is sighting.

The union once again places itself at the disposal of the authorities to collaborate in combating this practice and hopes that the problem will be addressed with the necessary urgency, given the risk to not only the crew and users of the air transport system, but also the whole society.