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Issued by the **AIC 18. 19 Task Team** under the collective auspices of the **Commercial Aviation Association of South Africa (CAASA)**, the **Aeroclub of South Africa**, the **Aviation Watch Action Committee**, the **Aviation Action Group** and Concerned Aircraft Owners, Pilots, Engineers and Operators.

INJUNCTION TO BE SOUGHT AS 12-YEAR AVIATION ENGINE CRISIS NOW BRINGS INDUSTRY TO A HALT

Following the Director of Civil Aviation (DCA) signing the dreaded 12-year engine overhaul ruling into law on 19 June 2025 in the South African Civil Aviation Technical Standards (SA-CATS) published in the Lexus Nexus, before follow-up discussions with the Hon. Minister of Transport Mrs. Barbara Creecy and a high-level delegation on 18 June 2025 could lead to a possible resolve, the combined industry AIC 18.19 Task Team has unexpectedly found itself in a desperate situation with all possible avenues seeking relief without resorting to legal action even at the pinnacle of aviation governance now being completely exhausted. The basis of urgency has now been firmly established in lieu of the no longer imminent but immediate harmful impact on the industry and the vital downstream sectors of the economy. Meanwhile calls have been streaming in from far and wide from workshops experiencing a mounting crisis as they are unable to sign off planes and helicopters after routine and compulsory maintenance.

During an on-line public meeting with close to 100 interested and aggrieved parties on Tuesday, 2 July 2025, it became clear that large scale damages to the industry has already begun taking place and are set to escalate. Workshop owners have attested to suspending all activities and putting staff on notice, pending the outcome of further actions. The uncertainty brought about by the ruling that prevents pilots and owners from continuing to operate planes and helicopters with engines that have not been completely overhauled in the previous 12 years, is taking its toll. Many more aircraft are expected to be constructively and effectively grounded within a matter of days.

The SACAA has recently presented evidence of 1372 inactive aircraft being affected. The Task Group has been receiving notices from owners that well exceed the aforementioned figure. Subject-matter experts forming part of the industry group continue to insist that the alternative procedure that has been in place for 20 years is far safer than doing overhauls arbitrarily once every 12-years and then carrying out a major overhaul regardless of the actual engine condition or its assessed fitness for use.

The new ruling, issued after two consecutive 180-days exemptions and despite being hotly contested, will unless revoked, now cost owners of aircraft with Teledyne-Continental and Textron-Lycoming engines between R1.0 m and R1.6m each per premature overhaul, depending on complexity, and additional costs associated with removal and refitment of engines, such as Airworthiness Directives, Service Bulletins, etc. applicable to airframes, loss of use and extended downtimes.

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OVER R2.0 BN IN DIRECT COSTS

The total direct costs of overhauling the engines will conservatively calculated amount to over a staggering R 2.0 bn which will undoubtedly force numerous owners to abandon their planes, as nobody would buy a commodity considered unfit for use. An aircraft cannot be exported either, except with a valid Certificate of Airworthiness (C of A) to or from the country of dispatch.

Factions within the industry that have indicated the desire to move ahead with independent actions, have been asked to exercise restraint and maintain the unity and solidarity of the currently undergoing processes.

At this stage the so-called 'war chest' is still filling up with sufficient funds legally required to launch the application, while the organizers are hoping against all indications that intervention by the Hon. Minister of Transport, Mrs. Barbara Creecy, will see the situation restored to normality.

With hundreds of calls from many aviators inferring that, compelled by the need to use their aircraft in the pursuit of business and interests, 'they have no choice but to fly in contravention of the ruling, unless specifically notified that Certificates of Airworthiness (C of A)'. Their only 'caveat' would supposedly be permission from the insurance brokers or underwriters. The AIC 18.19 Task Group maintains in response that only the relevant authorities would be legally entitled to and have the necessary locus standing to make such a decision. Whomever presumes to issue such permission to fly should be aware of liability and even culpability in case of an accident associated with passengers or third-parties suffering serious or fatal injuries in case of an accident.

The Task Group has admonished aviation participants from not attempting to take the law into their own hands and to not break solidarity with the mainstream actions and to rather continue support. The Task Teams has conveyed its resolve to refund remaining monies in the trust account after relief has been obtained, on a pro rata basis. At this stage all indications are that the SACAA is refusing to budge and that relief will only be obtainable through an urgent legal process. **[End]**

Please contact your club, association or organisation for details to become involved:

- melissa@caasa.co.za
- walter@aeroclub.co.za
- morne@awac.org.za

Please feel free to join the campaign and/or make a contribution. Participation is confidential. If possible, please use the online register <https://forms.gle/PAzntxQvwfyNP5Qv9>

For media enquiries or interviews, please contact:

- **Johan Lottering +2782-550-3665 /** info@jclpublications.co.za
- **Kevin Storie, CEO of CAASA,** kev@caasa.co.za