



MR D. D. W. REID – HM SENIOR CORONER FOR WORCESTERSHIRE

INVESTIGATION INTO THE DEATH OF MR PETER RICHARD GREGORY

CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY SUPPLEMENTAL RESPONSE TO A REPORT ON ACTION TO PREVENT

OTHER DEATHS PURSUANT TO REGULATIONS 28 & 29 OF THE CORONERS (INVESTIGATIONS)

REGULATIONS 2013

Introduction

The UK Civil Aviation Authority ('CAA') is providing this supplemental response to HM Senior Coroner's report on action to prevent future deaths dated 2 August 2024 ('the report'), issued following the inquest into the tragic death of Mr Peter Richard Gregory.

The CAA's initial regulation 29 response to the report was filed with the coroner's office on 26 September 2024.

Air Accident Investigation Branch Report dated 23 May 2024

The Senior Coroner will be aware that the UK Air Accident Investigations Branch ('AAIB') published a final report into the circumstances of this accident on 23 May 2024 which contained two safety recommendations for the CAA. The CAA accepted both recommendations and has been working with the British Balloon and Airship Club to address the issues identified in the report. A written update was recently sent to the AAIB by the CAA, the contents of which are set out below: -

Safety Recommendation 2024-008

It is recommended that the Civil Aviation Authority publish guidance on the design, testing and inspection of amateur-built balloons to reduce the risk of accidents due to unsafe conditions such as parachute stall.

CAA Response to Safety Recommendation 2024-008

The CAA is currently developing guidance on the design, testing and inspection of amateur-built balloons to reduce the risk of accidents due to unsafe conditions such as parachute stall.

The CAA has been liaising with the amateur built balloon community with a view to producing guidance in the form of webpages on the CAA website to provide best practice guidance on the design, testing and inspecting of amateur built balloons and it is hoped the BBAC will also provide guidance in this regard and our liaison with them continues. It is also our intention to issue a Safety Notice (SN) regarding our decision to continue to allow the amateur built balloons to be unregulated. The SN shall also direct to the CAA website guidance and our previous Safety Directive (SD) on volumetric and occupancy limitations which will endure on a non-expiring basis.

The CAA will provide an update on the actions taken to address this Safety Recommendation by the end of June 2025.

Safety Recommendation 2024-012

It is recommended that the Civil Aviation Authority publish guidance for the safe oversight of competition balloon flying in the UK, to ensure the risks associated with the activity are appropriately understood by competitors and managed by competition organisers.

CAA Response to Safety Recommendation 2024-012

The CAA is currently developing safety guidance for balloon events to ensure the risks associated with competition balloon flying are understood by competitors and managed by competition organisers. This will be in the form of a CAP [Civil Aviation Authority Publication] document.

The CAA has been liaising with the British Balloon and Airship Club and a working group has been established with Ballooning SMEs [Subject Matter Experts] from across the event and competition space to produce this CAP with an initial meeting on Thursday 27th February. The working group will review current guidance and rules within the UK and Overseas and identify any gaps to produce material for the CAP.

The CAA will provide an update on the actions taken to address this Safety Recommendation by the end of June 2025.

There are approximately 50 amateur-built hot air balloons currently flying in the UK. The CAA's review of available safety data for this aircraft type, and both the AAIB and Senior Coroner's reports will result in the CAA issuing a new Safety Notice ('SN') related to aircraft design, construction and testing. Furthermore, the CAA will publish new guidance for operators.

The CAA has determined that the airworthiness of amateur built balloons can remain free of direct regulation, but flight safety will be enhanced with the addition of newly published measures for better managing design integrity, construction, inspection and testing (and consequent in-service performance) that will be promulgated by the CAA in the SN and links to additional guidance available on the CAA website. The CAA has previously published a mandatory Safety Directive (SD) ([SD-2021/004: Non-Part 21 Amateur-Built Balloon and Airship Operational Limitations | UK Civil Aviation Authority](#)) for amateur or home-built balloons limiting volumetric size of balloon envelope and occupancy, in keeping with the intent that these aircraft are for recreational, rather than for commercial use.

The CAA has also recently hosted a meeting with SMEs from the UK ballooning community. During this meeting, attendees discussed a further proposal for the CAA to issue new operational safety guidance, focussing on acceptable rates of ascent/descent in balloon competition flying, a standardised safety/competition briefing, and broader event guidance with the intention that it shall be more widely promulgated via a newly published CAA CAP.

Before the next working group meeting planned for April 2025, the group has been tasked with gathering additional safety data relevant to the matters raised by both the AAIB and Senior Coroner. In addition, two members of this working group will be attending an international sporting conference on competition ballooning during the spring and will report their findings back to the working group. The CAA's new CAP document will be developed over the summer 2025 flying season with a view to public consultation towards the end of 2025, prior to publication.

The CAA will complete the work outlined above and publish the SN and operational guidance on or before 31st March 2026. This information will be available on the CAA's website in the publications library and will be promulgated to the UK ballooning community using targeted communications.
[Publications](#) | [UK Civil Aviation Authority](#)



Acting Head of General Aviation

Civil Aviation Authority

24 March 2025