

London, 05 June 2017

Dear IOGP Members Representatives and industry colleagues,

The Helicopter Terrain Avoidance Warning System (HTAWS) Research Project was initiated more than 10 years ago by the UK CAA, it has been endorsed and supported financially by IOGP and many of its Members individually.

The basis of the research project was that the flight envelopes originally used for helicopter terrain awareness and warning purposes were fixed wing aircraft algorithms transferred to helicopter operating environments with slight variations. After review of several incidents it became apparent that the current offshore warning envelopes could be enhanced to reduce the probability of Controlled Flight into Terrain (CFIT) or loss of control. An evidence based approach was taken to set the new warning envelopes using operators' Flight Data Management (FDM) data, which were then verified against actual accident and incident data, as well as during a simulator trial. In the past two years, HeliOffshore and IOGP have continued to spearhead this project and brought it to the forefront with the regulators, manufacturers and operating community.

Phase 1 of the project has optimised the Mode 1-6 offshore warning envelopes and introduced a new envelope that covers loss of airspeed due to insufficient power application, which was a causal factor of the Sumburgh accident. This significantly improves the warning time for flight crews to respond to the warning systems and take the action necessary to prevent an incident. The Phase 1 envelopes are ready for implementation, but it requires stakeholder support to move forward.

IOGP is requesting that its Members support this safety enhancement with the understanding that they will share a portion of the cost with their aircraft operators and manufacturers in order to improve safety. It is expected that the updated systems will be introduced through Aircraft Service Bulletins that cover the installation of HTAWS software and hardware changes required.

In order for IOGP Members and their aircraft operators to understand the cost and begin planning for aircraft modifications, IOGP requests that equipment and aircraft OEMs provide an estimated cost and implementation plan as soon as possible for this aircraft safety enhancement.

Kind regards,



Steve Hawkes
IOGP Aviation Subcommittee (Safety) Chair



Gordon Ballard
IOGP Executive Director