

This document is a translation of the original assessment in Swedish by SHK of the response to the recommendation. In case of discrepancies between this translation and the Swedish original text, the Swedish text shall prevail in the interpretation of the assessment.

Transportstyrelsen

Assessment of the Swedish Transport Agency response to safety recommendations

The Swedish Accident Investigation Authority (SHK) published on 30 January 2023 the final report (SHK 2023:03) concerning an accident at Örebro Airport on 8 July 2021 related to parachute operations. The report provided five safety recommendations, two of which to the Swedish Transport Agency (SHK 2023:03 R3 and R4).

The Swedish Transport Agency was recommended to:

- Within the framework regarding oversight of airports with the Basic Airport concept or equivalent, verify whether the airports have taken adequate measures to ensure that the response time of the airport's rescue services complies with regulations (R3).
- With support of SFF, take measures to ensure that appropriate risk assessment is carried out by pilots according to checklist and applied during flights in relation to parachute operations (R4).

On 25 April 2023, the Swedish Transport Agency responded to the two recommendations. In the response the Swedish Transport Agency describes the ongoing work in regards to the recommendations.

In the response that refers to safety recommendation R3, it is stated that the Swedish Transport Agency has added response times for the airports' rescue service as a focus area during oversight activities and that the airports response time must be reported to the authority through e.g. documented tests. Furthermore, it is stated in the response that the Swedish Transport Agency, in connection with the oversight, has a set of questions which, among other things, concerns how the airport handles rescue services when the airport is an open instrument airport but does not have scheduled flights, what other duties the rescue personnel have and how it affects the rescue services.

SHK assesses that the measures taken by the Swedish Transport Agency with regard to safety recommendation R3 provide good conditions for the authority to check whether the airports have taken adequate measures to ensure that the regulated response times are followed. The recommendation is therefore deemed satisfactory (Closed – Adequate response).

In the response regarding safety recommendation R4, it appears that the Swedish Transport Agency, together with SFF, carries out oversight activities at all local parachute clubs and that within the framework of these, priority is given to following up the risk analyses made by each club. Furthermore, it appears that in cases where insufficient risk inventories are noted, feedback and training is given. There is also a requirement that an updated document be sent to the Swedish Transport Agency. The Swedish Transport Agency is also working on updating the delegation agreement to SFF with the aim of introducing a requirement for a central flight operational manager position within SFF.

In the final report, SHK states that according to the regulations for non-commercial flight operations in connection with parachute operations, the commander is an operator and thus responsible for conducting a risk analysis before each flight. Furthermore, SHK states that despite the fact that the responsibility for the flight rests with the pilot, the Swedish Parachute Association (SFF) and the parachute clubs have a great influence on the culture, the standardization of routines and how flight operations are carried out. The report also raises the question of whether it is reasonable to expect that the pilots have sufficient tools to carry out an appropriate risk analysis.

The final report shows that there are deficiencies in the performance of appropriate risk analyses before flying with parachutists. SHK has therefore recommended that the Swedish Transport Agency, with support of SFF, take measures to ensure that appropriate risk assessments according to the checklist are carried out by pilots in parachute operations.

SHK takes a positive view of the oversight efforts that are now carried out by the Swedish Transport Agency and SFF, where follow-up of the club's risk analyses is an important part. In this context, it is important that these efforts also clearly include the individual pilots as operators. From the recommendation response sent in by SFF regarding the safety recommendation addressed to them (SHK 2023:03 R5) it appears that education and training regarding the regulations and risk analyses is ongoing for all parachute pilots and that part of the training takes place in connection with the Swedish Transport Agency's flight operational oversight in the clubs. According to SFF, this training will be fully completed with all pilots before the start of the 2024 season.

All in all, SHK makes the assessment that safety recommendation R4 is satisfactory (Closed – Adequate response).

Best regards,

Jenny Ferm
Chair Accident Investigations