



PRESS RELEASE

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IFALPA honours Kato Air Pilots for heroism and exceptional airmanship, and passengers for heroism

CAPE TOWN 10 April 2005 – At last night's Annual Conference Dinner the International Federation of Air Line Pilot's Associations (IFALPA) honoured Captain Stien Magne Lian, First Officer Markus Andresen for heroism and exceptional airmanship, and Mr Trond Frantzen and Councillor Odd Eriksen for their heroic actions on Kato Air flight 605 on the 28th of September last year. The aircraft involved in this incident was a Dornier 228 Narvik enroute to Bodø, Norway. As the crew began their final approach at about 5,000ft a passenger armed with an axe entered the cramped confines of the 228's cockpit and attacked the crew.

He first struck Captain Lian with the blunt end of the blade. As Lian recoiled from the attack his head struck the instrument panel and he sustained a further injury. The deranged passenger then turned his attentions to F/O Andresen striking his head with the sharp edge of the axe. As a result, Andresen sustained a very serious head wound. Indeed, it was later established that if the angle of the blade had been even a few degrees more acute the wound would have been fatal. At this point, Captain Lian managed to wrestle the axe from the assailant.

While a fight for control of the axe developed with the assailant blocking Lian's flight controls the aircraft entered a spiral dive though luckily this was over a gap in the surrounding high terrain. As Lian fought the assailant, Andresen struggled to regain control of the aircraft and recover from the dive. At this point, hearing the calls for help from the cockpit two passengers, Councillor Odd Eriksen and Mr Trond Frantzen, attacked the assailant and managed to pull him away from the controls and restrain him in the cabin.

Free of interference, Lian and Andresen managed to recover the aircraft, though by their own assessments, the aircraft's disappearance from the radar and observations of a number of witnesses on the ground, they estimate the recovery occurred less than 100ft from impact with the surface. The aircraft landed without further incident in Bodø, the assailant was arrested and Lian and Andresen were evacuated to hospital for treatment and observation.

Notes to Editors

The Polaris Award is granted by IFALPA for acts of exceptional airmanship, heroic action or a combination of these two attributes.

The International Federation of Air Line Pilots Associations (IFALPA) is the global voice of airline pilots it represents over 100,000 pilots in more than 95 countries world-wide. IFALPA's mission is to promote the highest levels of aviation safety and security globally.

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