

PRESS RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 0400 UTC 10 April 2005

IFALPA honours Kato Air Pilots for exceptional airmanship with First Officer Andresen receiving second such award

CAPE TOWN 10 April 2005 – At last night's Annual Conference Dinner the International Federation of Air Line Pilot's Associations (IFALPA) honoured First Officer Kristain Markus Andresen with a second Polaris Award. F/O Andresen was nominated for the second Award for his actions while operating Kato flight 603, a Dornier 228 commanded by Captain Ingmar Lyngmo, who also received the Polaris Award.

Flight 603 took off from the island of Røst destined for Bodø, Norway. Inbound to Bodø they were advised that a Dash 8 from Widerøe had been struck by lightning while approaching the airport's runway 25. As a result, Captain Lyngmo requested and received clearance for an approach to runway 07, circle to land runway 25, which should have avoided the worst of the reported weather. Surface conditions at the time were a 30-40 degree crosswind at 35 knots with gusts of over 40 knots.

The Approach Controller observed an improvement in conditions to the east of the airport and so vectored flight 603 direct to runway 25. While on approach Flight 603 was struck by lightning on the nose of the aircraft. The lightning discharged through the aircraft exiting through the tail. Immediately following the strike Lyngmo and Andresen, both temporarily blinded by the lightning strike, believed they had lost elevator control and declared a mayday.

In fact the lightning had melted and disconnected the link between the stick and the elevator. In addition, large parts of the surface of the elevator had been torn off by the lightning discharge. Using the aircraft's trim and engines for pitch control they continued the approach into the strong and gusty conditions. During the approach they were experiencing severe oscillations in pitch. On the first approach Flight 603 actually touched down on the runway briefly before being bounced back into the air at low speed and high angle of attack. Using a combination of power and trim, Lyngmo and Andresen recovered control and did a go around on a low visual circuit.

On the second attempt, and still in extremely gusty conditions, the crew managed to recover from a number of pitch oscillations on final approach – at one point disappearing behind terrain. The crew managed to recover a further dive as the Do228 crossed the threshold, although the aircraft was written off as destroyed subsequent to the landing. All the passengers and crew were evacuated without injury.

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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