

19CS02 08 November 2019

# CASOP Conference Statement on Similar sounding call-signs

Kelowna, BC - During the business of the CASOP Conference in Kelowna, BC October 8-10, 2019, the members adopted the following Conference statement:

*Similar call-signs used by aircraft operating in the same area while on the same frequency often give rise to potential and actual flight safety incidents. This hazard is usually referred to as “call-sign confusion”. The risk of call-sign confusion extends to air traffic service personnel, and to pilots. The hazard also exists for ground operations at airports.*

*This problem is not unique to Canada or Canadian air operators, as evidenced by the efforts undertaken by various organizations in Europe and the Middle East to address commercial call-sign confusion.*

*While there have been efforts to address the issue in Canada, there has been no sustained, coordinated approach. Given the success of some other jurisdictions in reducing the risks posed by similar call-signs, there is an opportunity to leverage their approaches and apply them to the Canadian context.*

*EUROCONTROL has a Call sign similarity tool (CSST) to help to de-conflict or eliminate similar call signs within a single aircraft operator’s (AOs) schedule prior to the start of the summer and winter season.*

*EUROCONTROL established procedures with participating aircraft operators to monitor the CSST’s operational effectiveness. They are monitoring the anticipated improvements in safety performance in conjunction with the EUROCONTROL voluntary ATM incident reporting (EVAIR) scheme.*

*EVAIR records show that for those aircraft operators who use the CSST to de-conflict their own schedules there have been very few, if any, reported similarity and confusion events. Comparisons with their pre-CSST performance demonstrate that the CSST definitely helps reduce operational risk and improves flight safety.*

*To date in Canada:*

* *Call-sign Confusion Commercial and Civilian Sub-working Groups have been formed.*
* *A presentation was given at the Best Practices Working Group in January 2019 to create awareness and inform air operators of the need for action.*
* *A presentation was given to Transport Canada (TC) in February 2019 where-in TC indicated their preliminary support for to the adoption of call-sign similarity rules in Canada.*
* *A paper was presented to the Canadian Performance-based Aviation Action Team (CPAAT), with goal of preparing a circular for Transport Canada for summer 2020.*
* *We are mid-way through a project to have analytics around similar call signs -based on the Eurocontrol rules. The intent is to formulate reports showing areas of consistent non-conformity.*

*The goals of the Sub-working Groups are as follows:*

* *Commercial Sub-working Group:*
	+ *Establish Call-sign similarity rules for commercial operators.*
	+ *Establish the use of an alphanumeric ATC call-sign in parallel to the traditional numeric (commercial) call-sign within Canadian airspace.*
	+ *Provide an interim update to the Canadian Performance-based Aviation Action Team (CPAAT). Timeframe: Winter 2019.*
	+ *Draft advisory circular(s) for Call-Sign Similarity Rules for commercial operators and the use of alpha-numeric ATC call-sign in parallel to the traditional numeric (commercial) call-sign. Timeframe: July 2020.*
* *Civil Sub-working Group:*
	+ *Establish administrative protocols to reduce the risk of civil registration call-sign confusion.*
	+ *Draft advisory circular(s) to present to CPAAT for their consideration.*

*The CASOP members urge Transport Canada and the aviation stakeholder community to collaboratively work towards eliminating, the issue of Similar Call-sign and call sign-confusion in Canada and thus, enhance the safety and security of all aviation operations sectors.*

*The CASOP members request that the NAV CANADA, Vice-President, Safety and Quality continue to raise the issue at the proper levels of Government and industry.*

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