



Safety recommendation no. 484

Date of the publication	19.08.2014
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Safety deficit	On 11 August 2012 a near-collision occurred in the Zurich terminal management area involving an Airbus A340-313 commercial aircraft and an ASW 20 glider because on the one hand the glider had penetrated into controlled airspace without clearance and on the other hand air traffic control had allowed the commercial aircraft to descend too low. In the course of the investigation it was established that the airspace structure around Zurich Airport imposes exacting demands on aircraft crews and air traffic controllers. This airspace structure therefore constitutes a systemic risk. In the final analysis the system is based on error-free working, and this, given normal human limitations, is based on false assumptions. The airspace is configured in such a way that even relatively small errors can lead to dangerous situations.
Safety recommendation	The Federal Office of Civil Aviation should, if necessary in co-operation with the supervisory authorities of neighbouring states and with the involvement of the transportation operators, examine the airspace structure around Zurich Airport and take measures which simplify the use of the airspace and/or which make it more tolerant of errors.
Addressees	BAZL Bundesamt für Zivilluftfahrt; BAZL Bundesamt für Zivilluftfahrt
Stage of the implementation	Not implemented – On 30 June 2022, the FOCA announced that it had relaunched the 2018 project to restructure the airspace around Zurich Airport, at the request of DETEC. The FOCA first drew up the Terms of Reference for the project, which were then checked and amended by the established core project team, in which all relevant stakeholders (FOCA, MAA, Skyguide, FZAG, General Aviation associations, DFS, BMVI und SWISS) are represented. The initial airspace design was drawn up and presented in March 2019, initially only to protect Zurich's instrument flight rules. All stakeholders were then invited to submit their requirements, after which a second design draft was presented in April 2020. Open points arising from the second draft were then addressed in a third version, which was presented in April 2021. Most of the stakeholders' demands could be incorporated into this version; however, the light aviation community has demands in some areas that clash with Zurich Airport's requirements. Since the design of the airspace is based on the qualitative protection values set by the FOCA, and the light aviation community's demands are at odds with these, the FOCA decided to seek a second quantitative opinion on restructuring the airspace around Zurich Airport. The collision risk modelling agreement was signed in October 2021 and the results are expected by the end of August 2022 at the latest.

Next steps:

The FOCA will assess the implications for the project's third airspace design on the basis of the results and decide on further steps to be taken in conjunction with the project's core team. The work still to be done is being planned in greater detail; the next steps will involve finalising a fourth version of the airspace design, which will serve as the basis for the safety work to take place between late 2022 and early 2023. The latter will involve all stakeholders and take into account the risk involved and the degree of acceptance within/at the limits of/outside the planned airspace structures around Zurich Airport. Public hearings are to be held in Switzerland and Germany from the end of the first quarter of 2023 with the aim of establishing the new airspace structure around Zurich Airport in March 2024.

**Investigation report concerning
the safety recommendation**

Schlussbericht
Final report
