

Shalin Gala

From: Shalin Gala
Sent: Thursday, September 15, 2022 10:59 AM
To: Director Airport Services
Cc: Secretary to Additional DG CAA; Malik Ahmed Shair Awan
Subject: RE: For Flt. Lt (Retd) Khaqan Murtaza from PETA - request for PCAA to cancel bird shooting plan

Dear Director Saadiq-ur-Rehman,

Thank you for your e-mail. Below is our response to the points you raised. **We reiterate our request that PCAA ban the deployment of bird shooters on the runway at Allama Iqbal International Airport in Lahore and use humane bird deterrents instead.**

You mentioned, “Aimless shots are fired to deter birds from coming close to area critical to flight operations.” However, the Canadian government [states](#) that “it is doubtful that live shot should be used to scare birds from an airfield” and “live ammunition is not a very effective deterrent.” The Canadian government goes on to state: “Birds habituate to shots, especially in the case of species that are not widely hunted. For example, shooting at cormorants and herons, and killing some of them, only temporarily repelled the species from fish farms (EIFAC 1988; Coniff 1991). Shooting was not effective in dispersing egrets from airports; most egrets returned shortly after being shot at, even if some birds were killed (Burger 1983; Fellows and Paton 1988). Shooting also was not effective in dispersing roosting geese (Taylor and Kirby 1990).”

Further, an analysis of Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and US Federal Aviation Administration data by The Star-Ledger showed that though the agency had expanded its lethal wildlife management measures considerably since 2009, wildlife collisions with aircrafts at New Jersey airports did not decline. Specifically, the 2014 [article](#) states: “An aircraft at one of the Port Authority’s New Jersey airports collides with an animal, typically a bird, about once every two days — a figure that has remained virtually unchanged every year since 2008, the year before the Flight 1549 crash. During that time, however, the number of animals — from European starlings to foxes to the threatened American kestrel — killed by the Port Authority has skyrocketed. In Newark, for example, just 10 animals were killed by the agency in 2008, while 1,267 were killed two years later.”

It appears you are using several non-lethal bird deterrent strategies, which we appreciate, however you did not mention current use of some of the methods we recommended (e.g., sonic devices, lasers, motion detectors, etc). You did mention that “procurement of state of the art acoustic bird repellent system is on the cards,” but we note that this plan was reported in a 2021 [article](#) and it’s unclear why there has been a delay in implementing this model.

Additionally, an effective and humane laser model you may find useful is [Bird B Gone’s Agrilaser®](#), which “uses advanced, patented optical laser-beam technology to harmlessly repel ... birds over great distances—up to 2,000 meters.” Per the product description: “The handheld device is silent and completely portable. ... [B]irds react to the green beam as they would an approaching car, so they flee the area. Yet, unlike some deterrent devices, birds will not get used to the laser beam’s implied threat. ... After using the Agrilaser® for about seven days, birds will consider the area unsafe and will avoid the area.”

Based on the variety of non-lethal methods available, and international guidance and data discouraging the use of live gunshots as bird deterrents, will PCAA please ban the deployment of bird shooters on the runway at Allama Iqbal International Airport in Lahore and only use humane bird deterrents instead?

Thank you, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely yours,
Shalin

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From: Director Airport Services [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 15, 2022 4:19 AM
To: Shalin Gala <ShalinG@peta.org>
Cc: Secretary to Additional DG CAA [REDACTED]; Malik Ahmed Shair Awan
Subject: For Flt. Lt (Retd) Khaqan Murtaza from PETA - request for PCAA to cancel bird shooting plan

Dear Shalin,

Reference is made to your email on the subject addressed to DGCAA dated 11 August 2022

Below find response on behalf of Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority:

"Flight safety is the first and foremost priority of Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA). Airport bird hazard management plans are implemented to keep bird activity at minimum. Risk mitigation actions taken in this regard include use of fire crackers and pressure horns to scare birds away; runway sweeper clears any insects around lights and water spots; insecticide is sprayed to clear insects that may attract birds; life-like scarecrows and shiny objects such as old CDs, foil pans or silver reflective tape are deployed to keep birds away from planes landing and taking off; trees and bushes are regularly pruned to discourage birds from seeking cover for roosting.

Additionally, different departments coordinate through Environmental Control Committee meetings to remove any potential food sources for birds e.g. solid waste dumped out in the open in the vicinity of airports. Moreover, bird hazard awareness pamphlets are distributed in areas adjoining airports, especially areas making up the final approach and take off. Print, electronic and social media campaigns are undertaken to reinforce the awareness message and get it across on mass level.

Bird control measures are stopped up during monsoon and Eid Ul Azha to cope with the increased bird activity. Extra bird shooters are employed as a last resort to curb the increasing bird strike risk to aircrafts. Aimless shots are fired to deter birds from coming close to area critical to flight operations. Furthermore, procurement of state of the art acoustic bird repellent system is on the cards to further reduce the instances of bird strikes and enhance flight safety. Accordingly, cooperation from communities living around airports and local government are crucial elements of the overall effort by CAA to ensure safe flight operations. "

Best Regards,

Sadiq-ur-Rehman

Director Airport Services

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