

GA FEEDBACK 100TH EDITION

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Category: [General Aviation](#)

Edition GAFB 100

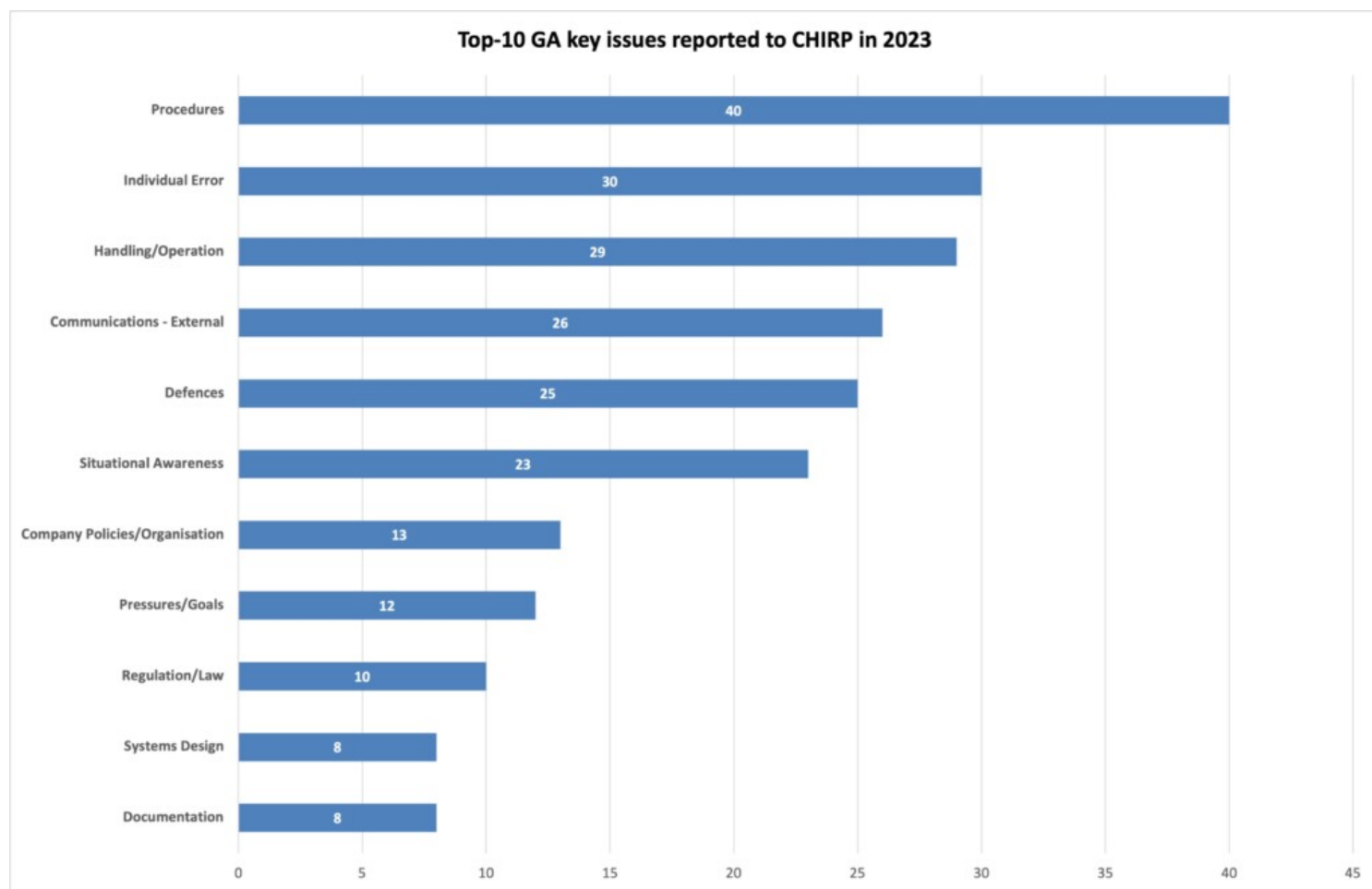
Editorial

Some thoughts on 2023 and back to flying in 2024

Welcome to the 100th edition of GA FEEDBACK! I thought I'd use this milestone to look back and see what has changed, or not, since we first started to review GA reports here at *CHIRP*. Although aviation itself and our understanding of Human Factors has matured greatly since our first edition of GA FEEDBACK in September 1999, it seems that some themes remain stubbornly prevalent and there were many parallels within the reports in this our hundredth newsletter. Edition 1 started with a report about loss of power after take-off, the associated limited time available to make decisions, and the advantages of practising forced landings so that such situations were at least somewhat familiar. By coincidence, here we are publishing a report on much the same issue in Report 3 (GA 1361) within this edition!

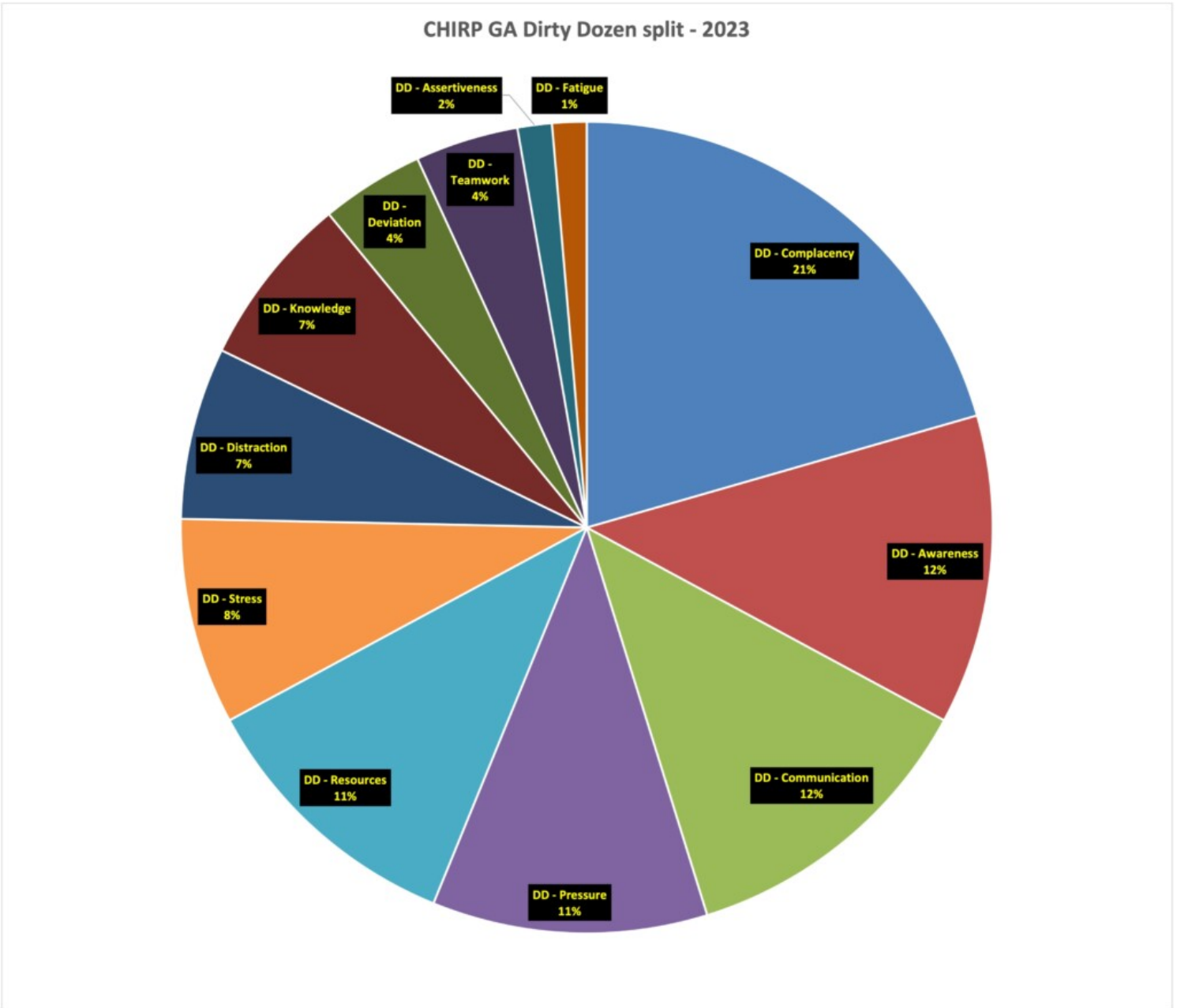
Edition 1 went on to discuss a report about normalisation of deviation (titled “Old and bold – tempting fate?”), and another that described an underconfident pilot who did not wish to use the radio to declare that they were lost (because they didn’t want to be thought a fool and were not confident in the use of the radio anyway). This culminated in them eventually making all sorts of mistakes due to mental fatigue and pressure to find and land at their airfield. Reluctance to talk on the radio, deviation and pressure are also all factors that are present in this edition’s crop of reports: as Mark Twain is reputed to have once said, *“History doesn’t repeat itself, but it does rhyme!”*

Coming back to the present, now that we’ve finalised the 2023 GA reports I thought it appropriate to see what themes and trends may have resulted. The bar chart shows the Top-10 GA headline issues, wherein it can be seen that **Procedures** and their application is the stand-out concern, with a fairly even split between, **Individual Error, Handling, Communication, Defences** and **Situational Awareness**. Note that a single report can have multiple key issues and so many of them are intertwined in the same incident.



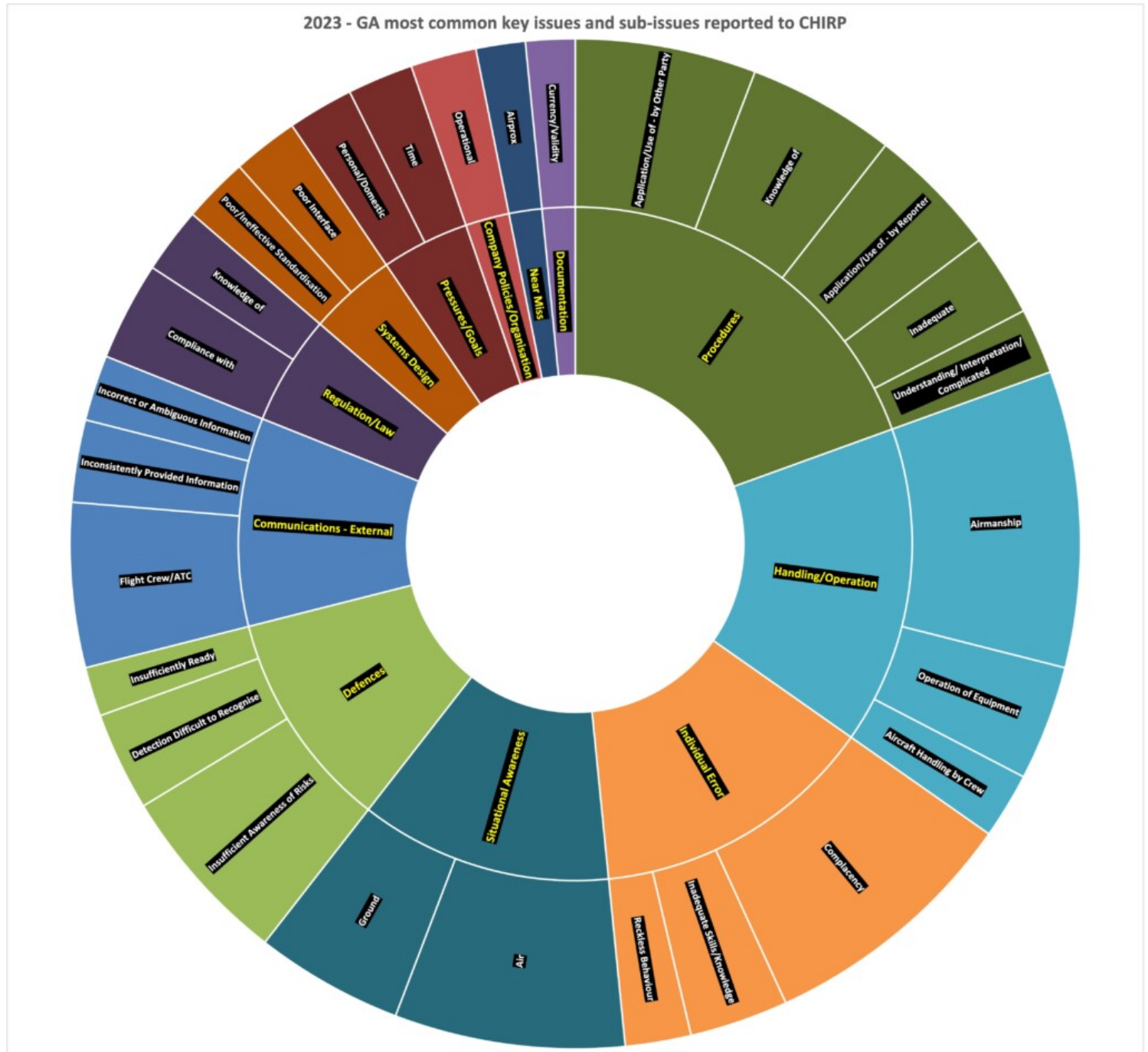
2023 saw us introduce the Dirty Dozen^[1] Human Factors classification system as a way of providing some simple insights into the Human Factors reported to CHIRP. Although we’re still evolving our

process, the associated aggregated statistics for the year provide another way of looking at what has been reported to us as shown in the pie-chart. **Complacency, Awareness, Communication** and **Pressure** accounted for over 50% of what we've seen, although I emphasise that this is a fairly small sample size and there's more to be done to refine our processes in this respect.



Perhaps more illuminating is the chart at the end which, although a bit of an eye-test, shows the associated sub-issues within the key issues in the previous bar chart. Here it can be seen that the big blocks reveal a similar story to the Dirty Dozen in that **Airmanship, Complacency, Situational Awareness (in the air), Insufficient Awareness of Risks, Application of Procedures,** and

Communication (between flight crew and ATC) were the main areas of concern. So, plenty of food for thought for all of us as within those themes as we prepare ourselves for the hopefully better weather ahead after the dismal first few months of 2024.



[1] From the [Skybrary website](#). The Dirty Dozen refers to twelve of the most common human error preconditions, or conditions that can act as precursors, to [accidents](#) or [incidents](#). These twelve elements influence people to make mistakes. The Dirty Dozen is a concept developed by Gordon

Dupont, in 1993, whilst he was working for [Transport Canada](#), and formed part of an elementary training programme for Human Performance in Maintenance. It has since become a cornerstone of Human Factors. The Dirty Dozen is not a comprehensive list of human error accident precursors, for example, [ICAO Circular 240-AN/144](#) lists over 300 human error precursors. However, since 1993 all areas of the aviation industry, not just aircraft maintenance, have found the Dirty Dozen a useful introduction to open discussions into human error in their businesses, organisations and workplaces.

Report to CHIRP!

Reporting to *CHIRP* is easy using our [website](#) reporting portal or App (scan the appropriate QR code shown or search for 'CHIRP Aviation' – ignoring the birdsong apps that may come up!). You'll be presented with a series of fields to complete, of which you fill in as much as you feel is relevant – not every field is mandatory, but the more information you can give us the better. Although you'll need to enter your email address to get access to the portal, none of your details are shared outside *CHIRP*, and we have our own independent secure database and IT systems to ensure confidentiality.



CHIRP FEEDBACK Survey

We value your opinion about our FEEDBACK newsletters and associated engagement methods, please spend a few minutes responding to [10 short questions about CHIRP Aviation FEEDBACK](#)



5% discount at Pooley's through CHIRP

Pooley's have kindly agreed to support *CHIRP's* fund-raising activities by allocating us a discount code on their website shop. Enter the code 'Chirp' (case sensitive) at the appropriate point at the payment stage to get 5% discount and generate some commission for *CHIRP*. Sadly, this doesn't apply to the purchase of Bose headsets, but everything else qualifies! If you do use Pooley's for your purchases, or know other people who do, please do share the code. The more the code is circulated, the more it is used and the greater the commission generated to help *CHIRP* build its resources to do more.



Comments on previous editions

GA FEEDBACK Ed 99, Report No.1 – GA1357. I would like to comment on your report in GA FEEDBACK 99 regarding the near miss between skydivers (GA1357). As the report concedes, this is the first skydiving report that *CHIRP* has received. As such it is probably a learning process for all parties but I was quite surprised to read the report and see that there was no input from the Chief Instructor (CI) at the location. It seems to me that the input from the Airfield Operator should have included some specific comment from the CI as the primary subject matter expert.

The nature of confidential reporting means it is not possible to say with certainty as to the level of experience of the reporting jumper, but to expect a potentially relatively inexperienced jumper to accurately measure distance during a brief moment whilst separating from a formation skydive is not realistic. Your comment that the Drop Zone Controller (DZC) “may have been overloaded or under pressure” is simply unqualified and unsubstantiated speculation. If it is acceptable to suggest that the DZC may have been overloaded I think it is equally fair to suggest that perhaps the jumper was simply overwhelmed by the experience of seeing other canopies but of course, this is equally an entirely unsubstantiated argument. Whilst it may have been that there could have been more separation between the dropping of the wingsuit jumper and the formation skydive group, as you mention this is a difficult issue to judge from the ground and any reduced separation was likely considered a minor occurrence that didn’t need to be highlighted as a reportable incident or require an SMS review. That being said, even if an incident was deemed to have been minor and resolved at the time, SMS entries should have been made regardless, and the CI should have made an input: although they might have felt that the incident was relatively minor, others may have had a different view and may have felt that the incident needed a further response.

CHIRP Response: Our process is such that once we receive a report we then contact the organisation concerned for their perspective. We don’t give or ask for names of those involved so that we can preserve confidentiality. Equally, we didn’t know the identities of the wingsuiter or the other skydivers so it was not within our ability to seek their personal view. Having no capacity to conduct an investigation ourselves, we contacted the Airfield Operator and expected them to review the concern and provide us with a consolidated response giving their perspective. We anticipated that that would involve them engaging with the CI as part of their process but, in hindsight, having not obtained any specific thoughts from the CI we should have pressed them

further for a more comprehensive comment. Having received the Airfield Operator response, the report was then reviewed by our skydiving specialists who gave us their opinion before we contacted the reporter to confirm their view and seek their agreement to publish.

The report we published was somewhat longer than normal due to the anticipated low level of knowledge about skydiving in the overall GA community. The report went into some basics that are no doubt bread-and-butter to the skydiving community but probably not well understood by those external. Although we might have made some generalisations as a result, we didn't mean that they should be taken as specifics. I think that within the report we were hopefully balanced in explaining that the DZC had a pretty difficult task to perform and so it was unfair to criticise them individually, and our comment about them potentially being under pressure was intended to convey the general busyness that was likely going on rather than to provide a critique of their actual performance, which of course we could not know. We also tried to make the point that, although they were in ultimate control of the DZ, they were not giving a 'permission' to drop *per se*, but more 'advice' that all appeared clear. In summary, it was absolutely not our intention to criticise the DZC specifically and, if that was how our comments were perceived, then I apologise, we were simply trying to outline the context and difficulties involved. Overall, our intent was to highlight the potential concerns surrounding the event and give others food for thought, even if they are highly experienced. We absolutely don't seek to apportion any blame or point fingers, so I hope that that was not how our comments were interpreted.

