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## MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### CIAA Conducts Full-Scale Emergency Exercise at CKIA

**Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands (16 July 2021)** The Cayman Islands Airports Authority (CIAA), which operates the Owen Roberts International Airport (ORIA) on Grand Cayman and the Charles Kirkconnell International Airport (CKIA) on Cayman Brac, conducted a full-scale “emergency” exercise at Charles Kirkconnell International Airport this month.

Based on emergency response principles taught in the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) Mass casualty Management and Incident Command System (ICS), the emergency exercise brought together a multitude of response agencies on Cayman Brac to test their preparedness and required involvement and action in the event of a real-life airport or aircraft emergency. A special element was added to the scenario as responders were also monitored for COVID-19 precautions.

The scenario that played out simulated a commercial aircraft crash into the sea off the coast of Cayman Brac after the pilot reported trouble controlling the aircraft, which was destined to Charles Kirkconnell International Airport from Miami International Airport, with 16 persons onboard.

Moments after impact, the Cayman Islands Fire Service responded with their rescue launch and set out to recover “survivors” from the deep ocean. Fourteen volunteers from the Cayman Islands Red Cross portrayed themselves as “victims” of the crash, donning realistic-looking wounds and injuries on their body, which were skillfully crafted and affixed by volunteer make-up artists on scene. All volunteers acted with great enthusiasm and passion in order to give the best challenge to emergency responders who carried out their roles with precision as if a real emergency had occurred.

CIAA Chief Safety Management Officer Andrew McLaughlin, who organised and coordinated the exercise on Cayman Brac, commented, “Planning an airport emergency exercise of this magnitude starts six months out and becomes more intense as the proposed date approaches. An Airport Emergency Planning Committee assists in crafting the exercise

scenario with the goal of creating an exercise that will not only challenge all of the responders but also present the least amount of impact on airport operations and movements of the general public.”

He further explained, “These exercises are a part of the Cayman Islands Airports’ certification process but, more importantly, demonstrate to the airport community and general public that we are prepared to respond in any emergency with highly skilled and trained personnel dedicated to ensuring possible victims are given the best opportunity for survival.”

Participating agencies in the exercise included the Cayman Islands Fire Service, Royal Cayman Islands Police Service, Department of Public Safety Communication, Faith Hospital Emergency Medical Services, Cayman Border Control, Joint Communications Services, Cayman Airways Ltd., Cayman Islands Red Cross, Sister Island Emergency Committee, Cayman Islands Civil Aviation Authority, Travel Cayman and Hazard Management Cayman Islands.

“I am very proud of the time, level of engagement and participation of all persons who were involved in this particular exercise, which saw the most participation from external agencies to date,” said Mr. McLaughlin. “While the emergency responders were aware COVID-19 precautions were needed, saving lives took precedence and, although some mistakes were made, this type of training will allow us to craft better procedures to ensure victims receive the best care while our responders protect themselves as well as their loved ones from transmission of this very dangerous virus.”



**PHOTOS SUBMITTED:** First responders arrive on scene to assist the “survivors” of the crash

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