



Amsterdam, 5 December 2016

Ladies and gentlemen,

My name is Rob Huyser and I am the director of the Aviation Department of the Ministry of Transport and Environment of The Netherlands and also chairman of the Netherlands Bird Strike Management Group. On behalf of my Ministry I welcome you in Amsterdam.

I first want to thank colonel Pellemans for hosting this meeting of the World Birdstrike Association Conference in this very nice venue of the Ministry of Defense at the historic center of Amsterdam.

I also want to thank Captain Rob van Eekeren, president of the WBA, for organizing this conference.

Dear participants...

With the increasing numbers of geese, and the risk of a collision between aircraft and geese, it is important that international and interdisciplinary cooperation is needed. That is why I believe this WBA meeting is of great importance.

When you arrived in the Netherlands you probably noticed that a great deal of our country consists of water. Actually.....at this moment you are in a place that is below sea level. The struggle against water taught us that a joint approach of problems is beneficial and needed to overcome complex challenges. This also applies to the bird and wildlife strike risk problem.

In this introduction I want to take the opportunity to briefly explain the way we approach the bird strike risk problem in The Netherlands.

The water in combination with the agricultural fields and nature..... that is ever present in The Netherlands .....has a great attraction on waterfowl like geese, and this results in numerous bird movements.

Inevitably, for many years, the bird strike risk has been an important issue at our airports and at my ministry. This is the reason we already have an active bird strike committee for more than 4 decades.

Nevertheless .....in 2010 .....there was a turning point in our approach to this issue. A serious bird strike incident with several Canadian geese focused our approach on tackling the actual problem in the Netherlands :..... Geese.

We decided to reorganize our bird strike committee into the “Netherlands Bird Strike Management Group”. Management is now more and directly involved in decision making.

As I earlier mentioned, a joint approach of problems is beneficial and absolutely essential to overcome complex challenges.

That is why we were pleased to convince stakeholders to participate in this bird strike management group. This means that besides the aviation parties .....also local governments, nature conservation and agricultural organizations are our partners. Together we signed an agreement which included the way we want to manage the bird strike risk with a focus on geese.

We established a four-track approach in which the different stakeholders take their responsibilities. This also means that our partners had to change their policy..... which off course sometimes was a challenge;

For example ;

- Birdlife Netherlands had to agree that a culling policy for geese was needed.
- The farmers around Schiphol Airport had to change their farming practices.
- Schiphol Airport decided to deploy bird detection radars.
- Landscape planners are restricted in the development of plans in particular for water and wetlands.

There will be presentations during this conference which will elaborate more on these examples.

I am proud to see that the World Bird Association took this model as an example on a worldwide level and is therefore engaging with Birdlife International, the International Pilot Association and others in a letter of understanding.

The next speaker captain van Eekeren will take you along in this new approach.

I sincerely believe that the world of aviation will become even more safe if we strengthen our cooperation in our WBA organization.

I wish you a very good conference.