



# AFRICAN AEROSPACE

THE MAGAZINE FOR AEROSPACE PROFESSIONALS IN AFRICA

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## Why the Euro blacklist makes AFRAA see red



**W**hen members of AFRAA get together in Kenya next month for the association's annual general meeting and aviation summit, there is no doubt that the European Union will be a key topic of discussion.

But that is only one among many that will be taxing the brains of Africa's aviation and airline leadership.

The EU's infamous 'blacklist' or now, more properly known, as the 'safety list' has been a bone of contention since the Europeans banned African airlines on a block basis. Guilty until proven innocent!

AFRAA and IATA railed against the process.

In this issue we have sent a reporter into the Commission to find out just why people there believe this is a good thing – and more importantly what an airline has to do to extract itself from the list with its reputation intact.

On what should be a more peaceful note, the idyllic Vanilla Islands cover an immense geographic area where air travel is essential – but is all going well? We visit some of the most beautiful islands on Earth to find out.

And AFRAA will also find itself addressing the issues of taxation. Anecdotal Africa has some of the highest taxation regimes for air travel – and the Vanilla Islands come out of it among the worst. In this issue we talk to some of the those leaders about the problems this brings, the damage it does to the hopes and aspirations of tourism boards and the long-term negative effect it has on African economies.

While the airlines feel they are facing an uphill struggle, some of their opposite numbers in the defence industry feel the same.



Our defence team took a look at the celebrations and the challenges occupying the thoughts of the South African Air Force while further north, our cover story features the successful intervention and the air power successes the French-led international force enjoyed in the Mali battles.

I hope you enjoy the read!  
Safe landings

**Alan Peaford**  
Editor in Chief

**COVER: USAF tanker from RAF Mildenhall refuels French Mirage 2000 over Mali. Picture by Staff Sgt. Austin M. May**

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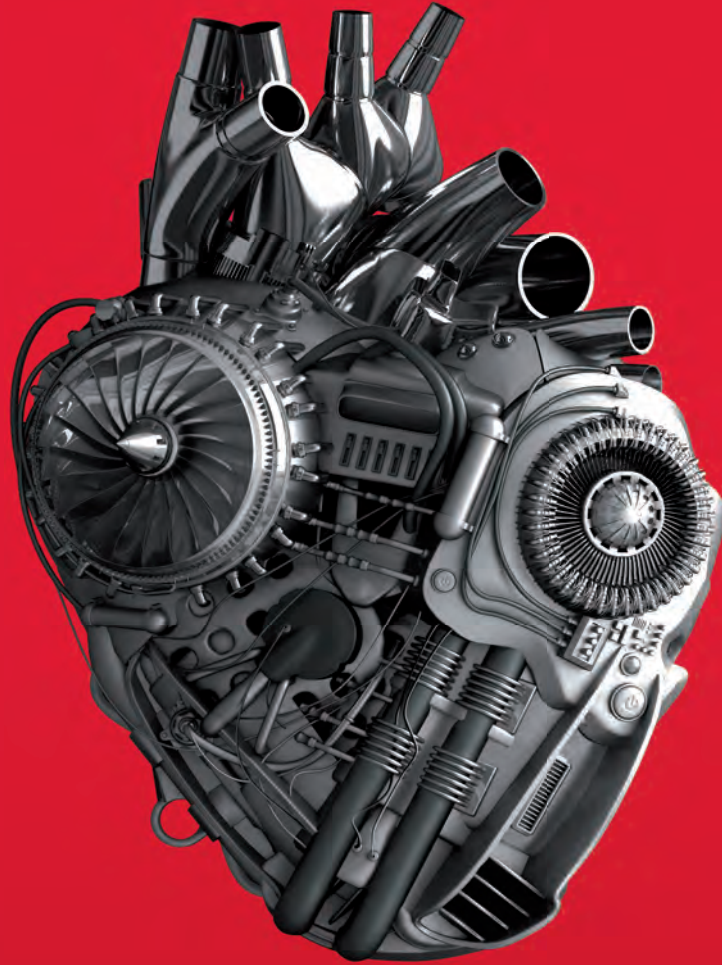
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Air Zimbabwe has returned to the skies following a successful IOSA safety audit.

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How international air power succeeded in its mission to rescue Mali from the rebels.

«Comment la puissance aérienne internationale a réussi dans sa mission de sauver Mali des rebelles.»

#### 40 The might of Hercules

Every one of the five African nations that have a Mediterranean coastline uses the Lockheed Martin C-130.

«Huit C-130 Hercules sont à l'abandon autour du site industriel de Marietta, dans l'état de Georgia depuis 40 ans. Une enquête d'Alan Dron.»

#### 44 Force or farce?

South African defence commentators despair of its ability to operate effectively. But why is it so bad?

«Afrique du Sud défense commentateurs désespoir de sa capacité à fonctionner efficacement. Mais pourquoi est-il si mauvais?»

#### 47 Happy birthday

The South African Air Force celebrates a double anniversary.

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# vanilla islands

## LES ILES VANILLES



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«Regional air transport was put under the microscope when the IOC hosted a conference looking at current challenges and strategies.»

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«Jean Claude de l'Estrac, secretary general of the IOC, talks about the issues of air transport in the region.»

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#### 68 AIR MADAGASCAR SUR TOUS LES FRONTS

L'Union européenne a levé, en juillet dernier, une partie de ses interdictions de vols en Europe pesant sur Air Madagascar. Une bouffée d'oxygène pour la compagnie.

«The European Union lifted in July, part of its flight bans on Air Madagascar. A breath of fresh air for the company.»

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«The new Mauritius terminal is one of the most impressive infrastructures made in the Indian Ocean and Africa.»

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L'aéroport de La Réunion «Roland Garros» a lancé en 2012 un vaste plan de modernisation aéroportuaire.

«Reunion Island has launched an ambitious development at the biggest of its two international airports.»







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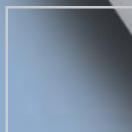
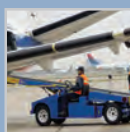
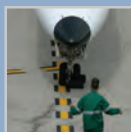
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## BUSINESS AVIATION



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SkyBird Air believes it has found a combination that will avoid the problems of other start-ups.

«Skybird Air croit qu'il a trouvé une combinaison de services qui permettront d'éviter les problèmes d'autres start-ups.»

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Why Africa's developing healthcare industry is not great news for the growing medevac business.

«L'industrie de la santé est en pleine croissance en Afrique. Ce n'est toutefois pas une bonne nouvelle pour les transporteurs opérant dans le secteur des évacuations d'urgence.»

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Demand for line maintenance and spare parts provision at various African airports is set to increase, but only the well prepared will benefit.

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«Kevin Hyatt, PDG de la Flight Safety Foundation, nous explique comment son organisation peut aider les opérateurs africains à améliorer la sécurité de leurs vols.»

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## CARGO



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How logistics company DHL safely transported nine silverback gorillas from Kent in the UK back to their habitat in Batéké Plateau National Park in Gabon.

«Ce n'est pas uniquement les êtres humains qui voyagent par avion. Plusieurs espèces d'animaux sont également amenés à voler et ce fut le cas pour le retour à la vie sauvage de neuf gorilles au dos argenté en juin dernier.»

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Siginon Aviation has opened a state-of-the-art cargo terminal in Nairobi. We speak to the company's divisional manager.

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More aircraft means more pilots, so Ethiopian Airlines has turned to the MPL programme to deliver new pilots into its operation.

### 90 FLIGHT TEST: ALENIA AERMACCHI SF-260TP

The SF-260TP is a small aircraft that punches well above its weight as Justin Paines, chief flying instructor with the Empire Test Pilots' School, found out on a recent flight test.







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## 1935 AERONICA IS AFRICA'S OLDEST FLYING PLANE

A 1935 Aeronca C-3, powered by a 40hp JAP J99 engine, has become Africa's oldest flying aircraft. Owned by South African teacher and historian John Illsley, the aircraft flew in August for the first time since World War II.

The tube and fabric high-wing monoplane was designed by the US-based Aeronautical Company of Cincinnati. The C-3 was a development of the single-seat C-2 and could fit two smallish adults side-by-side in its cramped cockpit.

With a cruising speed of 70mph, this particular C-3 was famous for being flown from Lympe in the UK to Johannesburg by Royal Air Force pilot, Flight Officer D Llewellyn in 1936. The flight covered 8,500 miles and routed via France, Italy, Libya and Sudan with many other stops.

Setting off on February 7, Llewellyn reached his destination on March 1,

having completed demonstration flights on the way. The flight took more than 130 hours and, although the engine ran without a hitch, the pilot landed in Zambia and changed the engine's pistons to high compression versions to create enough power to climb over high terrain en route.

The remarkable flight convinced a small number of companies to purchase Aeronca C-3s for pilot training in Africa.

Llewellyn's aircraft was exported to Mozambique and crashed there during World War Two. While other aircraft in the region were ultimately scrapped, the long-distance example's airframe found its way to a storage hangar in Johannesburg, where it was discovered by Illsley in the mid-90s and restored to 'as-new' condition.

### Summit special

Evergreen Apple Nigeria (EAN) has confirmed March 7 2014 as the date of the second Nigerian Business Aviation Conference. This year's conference brought together more than 100 international and African delegates from across the broad spectrum of business aviation, and it is anticipated that NBAC 2014 will once again attract high-net-worth individuals, OEMs, operators, financiers, lawyers, regulatory bodies and industry leaders.

### Pilot scheme

South African Airways (SAA) and SA Express are to link up to train scores of young South Africans to become qualified commercial pilots.

The jointly managed and resourced national pilot

training programme includes paying for the trainees' classroom tuition, practical training, flying time, accommodation, travel and other related expenses.

With a combined budget, SA Express and SAA want to ensure that trainees have access to highly qualified instructors, combining the very best of training methods, using purpose-built facilities and state-of-the-art aircraft.

### Towering Titus

Kenya Airways chief executive Titus Naikuni took one of the top honours at the airline strategy awards organised by *Airline Business* magazine.

Presenting the award, editor Max Kingsley Jones said: "During his 10 years at the helm, Naikuni has steered Kenya Airways on to a profitable and stable growth path."



Proflight Zambia brand ambassador and supermodel Petita Mwanza with the insakartists' model plane in Livingstone.

## Rubbish art wows UN delegations

Delegates to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) general assembly in Zambia in August saw an African-designed plane with a difference.

A special edition Boeing 737 was created from rubbish and displayed at the event before being melted into a solid form for a display at Livingstone Airport as a token of thanks by a group of 'insakartists', who were

sponsored by Zambian airline Proflight. As well as being sponsors of the international artists workshop and festival, which coincided with the UNWTO event, Proflight also helped to get the event off to a flying start when its Fly5 supergroup of brand ambassadors – JK, Slap Dee, Cactus Agony, Pompei and Petita Mwanza – performed at the opening celebrations.



## Safair on schedule for further success

Johannesburg-based Safair has been granted approval by the South African Air Service Licensing Council to launch its own domestic scheduled operation, FlySafair.

The company has a long history of humanitarian freight operations and also operates an ad hoc passenger charter and freight business using a small fleet of Boeing 737s. It currently flies seven Lockheed L100-30 Hercules aircraft, three Boeing 737-300s and a single 737-400 combi.

Offering up to ten daily flights between Johannesburg and Cape Town, FlySafair will be utilising two Boeing 737-400 aircraft to service the route. The low-cost carrier was set to officially launch tickets sales in September and be fully operational in the last quarter of 2013.

Safair has a 75% South African shareholding, with the other 25% owned by the Irish ASL Aviation Group.

## Bird's eye view

In-flight entertainment company, IFE Services, is Gambia Bird's new content service provider. The agreement covers the provision of a regularly refreshed package of modern classic movies and top-rated TV shows, as well as a broad selection of different music genres.

## Pison break-out

A new start-up in Ghana could be in the air by the end of the year. Pison Airways intends to serve Europe, Brazil and regional Africa with a Boeing 757 and a 737.

The Ghanaian Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) lists the airline's AOC as valid for domestic, regional and international flights.



Eric Martel (front right) and Todd Young (far left) vice president, customer services & support, commercial aircraft at the RSO opening.

## Bombardier playing its part in Johannesburg

Bombardier Aerospace has opened a new regional support office (RSO) and parts depot in Johannesburg, South Africa. The office and depot will anchor regional support capabilities for Bombardier business and commercial aircraft customers in Africa.

Both the Johannesburg RSO and parts depot are co-located at Bombardier's business aircraft authorised service facility (ASF), ExecuJet South Africa's facility at the Lanseria Airport.

The 2,153sqft (200sqm) Johannesburg parts depot will be operated through an agreement with ExecuJet South Africa. It will be equipped to serve all business and commercial aircraft customers within the region.

Eric Martel, Bombardier's president, customer services & specialised and amphibious aircraft, said: "We recognise how critical it is for customers to have support and parts available in their own region. This is yet another important change we have implemented to foster continuing success for the growing number of Bombardier aircraft operators."

More than 240 Bombardier business and commercial jets are based in Africa.

Both the Johannesburg RSO and parts depot facility will provide expertise and support to local customers, as well as customers flying into the region.



## Star is rising in the maintenance world

Romania's Aerostar has won a contract from Starbow of Ghana to carry out 'C' checks on its fleet of four BAe 146 regional jetliners.

The first aircraft, a BAe 146-300 (9G-SBB; msn E3123), arrived at Aerostar's Bacau facility on May 31 and departed on schedule on July 2.

The remaining Starbow aircraft will ferry to Bacau during the course of this year, with the second aircraft, a BAe 146-200 (9G-SBD; msn E2059) having arrived at Aerostar on July 3.

## Niamey transfer

Nigeria's Air Niamey has received the first of two A320-200s after the aircraft was transferred from the US aircraft registry to the Nigerian in June.

There is still speculation about involvement by Turkish Airlines in the relaunch of the airline.

## Evolution forum

The African Airport Evolution Forum will take place at the Laico Regency Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya, from October 28-30 2013.

The event will offer solutions for airport expansion and modernisation to enable international compliance and local development programmes, even in an infrastructure-poor environment.

Organisers say the event

unites airport authorities, government, aviation authorities and airlines and helps them to make decisions about airport expansion, technology adoption, facilities management and commercial development.

## Elementary research

Boeing and South Africa's Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) are to conduct joint research on ways to incorporate titanium powder into industrial manufacturing processes.

Dr William Lyons, Boeing's research & technology director said: "This research is important to the aviation industry because it will enable us to use titanium powder for manufacturing in ways that reduce energy consumption and waste."



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## Denel cops deal

Eurocopter has expanded its partnership with South Africa's Denel Aviation on helicopter repair and maintenance. Under a new contract, Denel can offer its repairs and servicing capabilities on Super-Puma helicopters in Southern Africa.

The deal includes the overhaul of specialised helicopter transmission systems on Puma and Super Puma helicopters, rotor blades on Super Pumas and also extends Denel's relationship as a Eurocopter-approved repair and overhaul centre in the Southern African Development Community and Kenya.

This permits Denel to repair and service BO-105, Alouette and Puma helicopters. It is also approved to service the SA Police Service's AS350 Squirrel helicopters.

## 1time... again

A planned Zimbabwe-based regional start-up hopes to launch operations this month under the 1time name and is working on a deal to relaunch the brand in South Africa by buying the holding company of the former low-cost carrier.

The new airline, 1time Zimbabwe, is a joint



## Henley takes a punt on two Bell 222UTs

Rand Airport-based Henley Air, one of South Africa's largest rotary wing charter and training operators, has acquired two Bell 222UT aircraft – one of them the last off the production line and manufactured in 1988. The 222UTs are developments of the 222 family but fitted with skid landing gear.

They use freed up space in their sponsons to increase fuel capacity, giving them an additional 50 minutes of endurance.

Henley has developed a niche market for twin-engine charter helicopters and they will be used to grow the existing corporate demand from companies, mostly mining and construction houses, to provide twin-engine safety.

The UTs are not the first 222s to be operated

by Henley Air. The company has managed 222B models and also provides type ratings via its busy rotary wing training establishment.

Nor are the 222s the only multi-engine helicopters operated by Henley. The company also flies contracted Agusta A109s.

Henley has 30 rotary wing aircraft on its AOC and hangars 45 helicopters in its 7,500sqm facility. It owns a Bell 206 JetRanger, upgraded LongRanger L1, three Robinson R22s and the two Bell 222UTs. The company also has extensive experience in airborne stolen vehicle tracking.

The 222UTs have both been extensively refurbished with new interiors, and the first one has been released to join Henley's busy charter division.

venture between former Air Zimbabwe chief executive and owner of Central Air Transport Services (CAT), Oscar Madombwe, and South Africa-based Pak Africa Aviation, a consortium of investors from Dubai and Pakistan.

Pak Africa Aviation has itself acquired a 49% stake in CAT.

## Right and proper

Bombardier Aerospace has named Ethiopian Airlines as an authorised service facility (ASF) to perform line and heavy maintenance on Q400 and Q400 NextGen turboprop aircraft.

Last year Ethiopian became the first to take

delivery of the NextGen turboprop airliners outfitted with a dual-class configuration on Bombardier's production line. These five dual-class aircraft are currently in service with the airline and its affiliate, ASKY Airlines of Togo. In total, the carriers operate a fleet of 13 Q400 airliners.

## High-class trainer

EgyptAir Training Center has been named 'aviation training service provider of the year' in Africa.

The award was handed out during the exhibition and conference at the Aviation Suppliers and Stakeholders Convention in Nairobi.

The African Airlines Association (AFRAA) visited to review the facilities of EgyptAir Training Center, which included flight simulators, 70 modernised classrooms, and the cabin crew cabin emergency evacuation trainer (CEET) device.

## Libyan leader

Libyan Airlines has taken delivery of its first A330-200, becoming a new operator for the type. The carrier already operates seven A320 aircraft, with three A330-200 and four A350-800 aircraft on order.

Accommodating a two-class configuration of 24 business and 235 economy seats, the aircraft is powered by GE CF6-80 engines and will be deployed in the Middle East, around Dubai and Jeddah, as well as on Asian and European trunk routes.

## Seychelles switch

Air Seychelles has outsourced its passenger, cargo and airmail revenue accounting as well as miscellaneous (non-transport) billing to Accelya Kale. The company had previously provided similar services to Air Seychelles' parent company Etihad.

## Tunisair support

Tunisair is receiving government backing to buy ten Airbus A320s as part of a raft of measures laid down by the stakeholder to help the struggling airline return to profitability.

## Mango Boeings sitting pretty with Acro's seats



UK-based passenger aircraft seat manufacturer Acro Aircraft Seating is installing its Ultra R seats aboard Mango Airlines' entire fleet of Boeing 737-800 aircraft.

The deal, which includes six shipsets and equates to 1116 economy class seats, marks the first major African client for the manufacturer.

Distinguished by an ultra-light weight and slim seatback design, the Ultra R seats on the first two newly re-fitted Boeing 737-800s entered service in August.

Mango said it selected Acro's Ultra R seat as it offered the most passenger space, comfort and weight savings of all those it tested.

Crucially, the weight savings of approximately 800kg per aircraft will help the airline improve fuel efficiency, reduce CO2 emissions and realise significant cost savings to the extent that the new Ultra R seats will literally pay for themselves.

The seats feature E-Leather upholstery and a modular seatback with a generous recline of more than four inches.



## ATNS's new CEO

South Africa's Air Traffic and Navigation Services (ATNS) board has a new chief executive. Thabani Mthiyane was appointed following a rigorous and thorough recruitment process and subsequent approval by the cabinet. Chairman Mpho Mamashela said Mthiyane has extensive technical and operational experience in all aspects of air traffic management.

## Mauritius move

Emirates will commence a daily Airbus A380 service from Dubai to Mauritius from December 16 2013.

## Arik addition

Nigeria's Arik Air has increased its fleet to 24 aircraft with the introduction of a new Airbus A330-200. This is the first of four A330s due to be delivered over the coming year.

## Not goods enough

African airlines experienced a 4.9% contraction in cargo movements in July year-on-year according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

## Special delivery

South African Airways (SAA) has taken delivery of its first two A320s out of a total of 20 aircraft ordered from Airbus in 2010. The development is set to deliver cost efficiencies and allow SAA to expand its sub-Saharan regional route network and boost revenue in the rapidly growing market.

## Hadid added

Hadid International Services – the Dubai-headquartered flight support company – has stepped up its presence and support in Africa having added in-house staff to supervise activities in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Republic of Congo.



PICTURE: NBC

## Blazing a trail in aerospace history

A team of specialist engineers from Boeing is working at Heathrow Airport to repair the Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 787 Dreamliner, which caught fire at the London airport in July.

The repair is believed to be, possibly, one of the largest composite repair projects in aerospace history, according to industry specialists.

Although the fire blackened and damaged the composite structure, it didn't burn all the way through the skin.

Investigators traced the fire to an

emergency locator transmitter in the upper rear part of the aircraft.

The airline, in the meantime, has expressed confidence in the plane and will proceed with an order for eight more.

"The aircraft is undergoing a challenging time to mature, but it's improving," said Ethiopian Airlines chief executive Tewolde Gebremariam. "I have strong confidence in this aircraft. It is the future in aviation," he told a news conference after the airline announced a near tripling of its annual net profits.

## More RAM!

Royal Air Maroc (RAM) is looking to acquire between "20 and 30 NextGen aircraft, including 15 medium-haul and five long-haul jets" before 2020, according to the airline's CEO Driss Benhima.

RAM is due to take delivery of its first two of four B787-8s imminently, having postponed their original arrival from Q4 of 2012.

Embraer's E-Jet, (currently on a trial run) along with Bombardier's CSeries were also under review, he said.

## Coal goal

Nigeria's Akanu Ibiam International Airport, Enugu, will receive the first international flight to the 'Coal City'. Ethiopian Airlines has indicated its readiness to be the first international carrier to fly to the airport.

## Well Marshalled

The Marshall Aerospace and Defence Group has reassured African owners and operators of Hawker Beechcraft (HBC) equipment that there will be MRO continuity following its acquisition of the HBC European MRO business.

The Broughton location in the UK, known as Hawker Beechcraft Services Chester, has provided a full range of maintenance, modification, paint and upgrade services to owners of Hawker and Beechcraft aircraft for more than 50 years.

The business will be known as Marshall Aviation Services.

## Outstanding SITA

SITA has been named aviation IT service provider of the year by the African Airlines Association (AFRAA).

## Time lords

South African Airways (SAA) has been declared as the most on-time airline in the world according to FlightStats, the global flight and airport information service. Only six major international carriers delivered more than 90% of their flights on time.



Michel Coulomb: "We are uniquely positioned to serve this region."

## Elit'Avia expanding in west Africa

Elit'Avia has opened an office in Accra, Ghana, to meet growing demand for business aviation in west Africa.

The provider of business aircraft charter, management and operation services currently manages four aircraft for west African clients – two Bombardier Global 6000s, a Bombardier Global XRS in Nigeria, and a Dassault Falcon 2000 in Ghana – and is looking to expand its fleet.

"Management of these aircraft is a blend of both exclusive client use and charter availability," said Michel Coulomb, president. "Elit'Avia has been active in west Africa for about 18 months. The area has not traditionally been well served by business aviation management companies, which is remarkable considering that Nigeria had more new aircraft orders than South Africa last year."

Coulomb added: "Our west African clients value safety, security, comfort and direct

access to destinations within the continent – which may otherwise be difficult to access efficiently using commercial aviation services. Internationally, we are seeing growth traffic between the region and destinations including Moscow and Paris.

"As the economies of the region's nations continue to grow, we are contributing to an overall elevation of business aviation service standards. We are uniquely positioned to serve this region and look forward to sharing in its growth."

From its headquarters in Slovenia, the company manages a fleet of Bombardier Globals, Bombardier Challengers, Dassault Falcons and has experience managing Gulfstream G550s and G450s. Elit'Avia also expects to take delivery of a Gulfstream G550, a Dassault Falcon 7x and a Bombardier Challenger 605 before the end of the year.





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## *Our academy breaks boundaries in IATA trainings.*

**N**ow that IATA has combined with the brand power of Turkish Aviation Academy, our academy will be able to organize trainings in cooperation with IATA all over the world, not just in Istanbul. The negotiations between Turkish Aviation Academy and IATA started in the middle of 2011 and were concluded at the end of that year. Our academy has been given the roles of Authorized Training Center (ATC) and Regional Training Partner (RTP). After this period, mutual relationships developed on the basis of trust, which is a sign that better joint projects are to come. Turkish Aviation Academy is the IATA Regional Training Partner that organized the most number of trainings in 2012. Joint trainings helped improve cooperation, and the 2012 IATA Training Partner Congress, which was hosted by our academy and received full marks from all participants, played a crucial role in terms of strengthening relationships.

As the Authorized Training Center (ATC) of IATA, our academy can provide IATA trainings at our own location and with our own instructors. Trainings, which will be given in English and Turkish, were determined within the framework of discussions and agreements with IATA. Under the scope of the Regional Training Partnership (RTP) Agreement, our academy can provide trainings to students from all over the world at our own location and with IATA instructors, as we hold the title of Regional Training Partner. Unfortunately, Istanbul has been the only possible location that is within the scope of both these agreements. As a positive result of joint projects and bilateral discussions, these partnerships have now taken on a different dimension. With the latest agreement, Turkish Aviation Academy and IATA have the opportunity to organize joint trainings all over the world.





*One of the major talking points at the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) general assembly in Kenya will be the controversial European blacklist, officially known as the European Safety List. Victoria Moores caught up with a European Commission official to tackle some of the criticisms of the list, and to find out how it actually works in practice.*

# BEHIND THE BLACKLIST

«Un ticket pour l'Europe» – Page 24

The list was first published in March 2006 and is administered by case handlers within the aviation safety unit of the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG-MOVE). If an airline or an authority is blacklisted, these are the people that you need to speak with. This is important, as an open and constructive dialogue with the Commission seems to be one of the key factors in getting off the blacklist.

“Mauritania was on the list but it has now been removed because the authorities took proper action to address the issues,” explained the Commission official. “They were very proactive. They accepted they had a problem, engaged in a dialogue with us, addressed the specific issues and provided all the information we needed. We went out there and did a check. They had improved, so their work paid off and they came off the list.”

Case handlers are alerted when there is an accident or incident, if an issue from a safety assessment of foreign aircraft (SAFA) ramp inspection is escalated, or if an ICAO or FAA audit reveals serious shortcomings.

This rings an alarm bell and opens a dialogue but does not necessarily lead to a ban. “We are not trying to fill up the list; we are actually trying to empty it by addressing the underlying safety issues,” explained the official. “A ban is used only as a last resort, when nothing else is working and we have no other option. We don’t measure against European rules. We expect to see ICAO standards applied, as laid down by the Chicago Convention, and nothing more than that.”

Various organisations have criticised the

Commission, saying that the safety list lacks transparency and that the criteria for being added to, and removed from, the list are unclear. However, the Commission official said the standards were laid down in the legislation. “ICAO looks primarily at whether there are processes in place to comply with its standards. What we do in addition is we look at whether it works. We take a very practical approach and get right down into the weeds of the oversight to be sure that the system delivers safety in a sustainable manner.”



The safety list is generally updated twice a year, around June and November, when the Commission’s air safety committee meets to review any changes. This is when airlines and states have the opportunity to be removed from the list. To achieve this, an airline and its authority need to demonstrate that the safety issue has been recognised and resolved. “What we have found is that sometimes authorities go through a period of denial, where they think everything is perfectly fine, even though there is clear evidence that it is not. We have had several cases where a year was lost because of this,” said the official.

Once an issue has been identified, there will be an in-depth dialogue and the Commission will request further information. “We try to work with them and help where we can, but we can’t provide a

huge amount of resources. However, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) can go out there and advise them of the steps they need to take.”

EASA coordinates SAFA checks and assists the Commission, but it is not responsible for the oversight of the safety list. This is the Commission’s responsibility, although it often taps EASA for technical expertise when it visits airlines and states to check their safety systems. This is often the next step, but setting up an on-site visit requires at least two months’ notice.

Once the inspection is complete, the airline and authority are invited to Brussels to present their case, firstly to the aviation safety unit and then then to the operational and airworthiness experts on the European Commission’s air safety committee.

The pre-meeting with the aviation safety unit is effectively a dummy run, ahead of the main committee, although this may be bypassed if the ground has already been covered during the site visit. This is used to assess whether there are still any outstanding issues to be tackled and the case is not referred to the committee until the aviation safety unit is satisfied.

“We never have the air carrier here [presenting to the air safety committee] without the competent authority. The competent authority is responsible for issuing the air operator’s certificate (AOC), so it has a clear responsibility for the safety of the airline. We really must have competent authority

“We are not trying to fill up the list; we are actually trying to empty it by addressing the underlying safety issues.”



Siim Kallas (left), Commission Vice-President responsible for transport, said: “The EU air safety list was created for the protection of European skies and citizens, but it can also serve as a wake-up call to countries and airlines in need to get their safety house back in order. We have confirmed our willingness to remove countries and airlines from the list if they show real commitment and capacity to implement international safety standards in a sustainable manner. Beside Philippines, Venezuela and Mauritania, good signs of progress are also coming from a number of other African countries.”

on board. We are always looking for two green lights, one from the authority and one from the airline,” explained the official.

The length of the meetings varies from two to five hours, depending on the extent of the issues, the level of preparation and the openness of the discussion. “The biggest issue is death by PowerPoint. You are talking to experts, get straight to the issue,” advised the official. “The committee is interested in whether you recognise the safety issues that exist and what you are doing to address them.”



During the air safety committee hearings, experts from the European Union member states question the airline and its authority on the changes made. The committee sits for three days. The first two days are filled with hearings and on the final half-day the committee comes up with a proposal about whether to remove the airline/state from the list. This proposal is then passed to the Parliament’s transport committee and translated, which normally takes about 10 days. It is then signed off by a commissioner and formally adopted. Once this process has been completed, the state is told whether it has been removed from the list.

The Commission has faced criticism from associations such as IATA and AFRAA for its ‘name and shame’ strategy but the official defends this approach saying: “If you are not upfront, nobody will accept that you have an issue and there is no impetus for changes to be made.”

She also denied that there was any economic

## TCO system about to change

**Airlines flying into Europe need to be aware that the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) will soon be made responsible for granting third country operator (TCO) authorisations, rather than the individual member states.**

**The change is going through the European rule-making process and is expected to become law from February 2014, although there will be a 30-month transition from the current system.**

**Following the changeover, individual member states will stop renewing and issuing TCO authorisations. Instead, every airline wanting to operate to Europe – including those already cleared – will need to complete an online application.**

**Once approved, the airline will have an on-going TCO clearance for all European member states, which will not need to be renewed, although they will be monitored by EASA and operators will need to let the European regulator know if there are any major changes to their operation.**

**EASA’s new responsibilities will streamline and standardise the TCO process but this will not substitute the European Safety List. Carriers without TCO authorisation will not be permitted to operate to Europe and the Commission will maintain its safety list evaluation for all non-European airlines, including those which do not directly operate to European airports.**

agenda behind the policy. “There are concerns that the safety list is being used as an economic tool. That is certainly not true. If you look at the criteria in the legislation, there is no economic agenda at all. We are only interested in making a decision based on safety and on solving those problems.”

The purpose of the list is to protect travellers flying into and out of the European Union. The European Commission has no powers to ban airlines that operate outside its own borders, but the list does include airlines that fall short of its criteria, acting as advice for Europeans travelling overseas.

Airline associations have also questioned why European carriers are allowed to operate to states that are subject to a blanket ban due to poor oversight. “That is a very good question with a very straight-forward answer,” said the official. “European airlines that operate into those countries are well aware of the weaknesses of the state, so they mitigate against that risk. For example, if the weakness is poor air traffic control, they ensure that the traffic collision avoidance system (TCAS) is working and crews are specifically trained and briefed to talk directly with other aircraft. Ultimately they will pull their operations if they are not prepared to take the risk it entails.” The airline’s local authority oversees these mitigations.

While the safety list may be a controversial approach, safety is the undisputed number one priority of airlines and authorities worldwide. Regardless of the source of the improvement, the official acknowledges that there is a genuine and growing desire among African authorities to improve their air safety record and oversight.





*Dr Elijah Chingosho, secretary general of the African Airlines Association (AFRAA), had plenty to say in a tough question and answer session with **Victoria Moores**.*

# It's time for this inequality to stop

## **Q** Is AFRAA for or against the European Safety List and why?

AFRAA is against the EU blacklist, which has now been renamed the safety list.

The EU practice of blacklisting, be it partially or fully, is very damaging to the whole African aviation industry beyond the targeted airlines or states. It causes tremendous economic and financial difficulties to the countries concerned and their people, while making no practical contribution to aviation safety.

African airlines make up 147 of the 280 airlines worldwide on the banned list, creating the impression that all African aviation is unsafe. This puts the world-class African airlines at a competitive disadvantage compared with their European counterparts. This is happening at a time when intercontinental traffic between Africa and Europe is very much dominated by European carriers with, for example, Air France having a virtual monopoly on francophone west and central African intercontinental traffic.

The process of putting a country or airline on the banned list is not transparent and neither is the process of getting off of the banned list. Only one country in Africa, namely Mauritania, has been removed from the EU banned list since the process of blacklisting started in 2006, with the list growing over the years, despite improvement in safety standards in Africa.

Also, a large majority of the airlines on the banned list do not even exist, or are just paper airlines.

Of the 147 African airlines on the banned list, fewer than half-a-dozen were either flying to Europe or intended to do so. Those few that did were largely niche players, principally serving ethnic traffic. These include world-class carriers Air Madagascar and LAM Mozambique Airlines. These two airlines have an excellent safety record, of which few airlines worldwide can boast. The airlines are IATA operational safety audit (IOSA) registered and adopt industry best practices in safety, security and quality. Statistics from the Flight Safety Foundation show that these carriers have never had any serious accidents in the last 30 years.

In contrast, some major European airlines can make no such claim. For example, according to the Flight Safety Foundation, Air France has had 25 major accidents (involving substantial damage to aircraft, serious or fatal injuries) since

Continued  
on Page 22





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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

1990, three of them with fatalities, totalling 348 deaths.

If, indeed, the reasons for putting an airline or a country on the banned list are to do with safety, for example, a country having international airports with inadequate search and rescue services, no proper security fencing, inadequate fire-fighting services or untrained fire fighters, then why do EU carriers fly to those airports? Surely if a country or destination is unsafe for African airlines, it is also unsafe for EU carriers. Instead, what we witness is that when the local carrier is banned, EU carriers increase frequencies to that destination to take over the market lost by the banned airline.

The unilateral nature of the decision to ban, with its attendant lack of transparency, throws serious doubt as to its fairness, as well as its impartiality. The practice appears to be prone to manipulation for political and economic interest. This is because the net beneficiaries from the barring of states and/or airlines so far have been EU carriers as they step in to capitalise on the vacuum created.

A blacklisting not only affects airlines' operation into EU destinations but also has adverse effects on their operations to other cities outside Europe, as the airline's ticket sales in EU countries dwindle and codeshare/interline partners withdraw their tickets and limit their cooperation.

**Q What is AFRAA's preferred approach?**

We want a transparent process so all relevant stakeholders are clear on the programmes and initiatives needed to avoid being on the banned list, as well to get those on the list removed. This lack of transparency on how a state or airline gets on and off of the banned list has led African stakeholders to see it as a commercial tool to tarnish the image of African aviation and give commercial advantage to EU carriers.

One also finds that paper airlines constitute the majority of the banned airlines. We see no logic in banning an airline that is only on paper. We also notice that a country without an airline, namely Liberia, is also on the banned list, the logic of which is difficult to understand.

If a country or destination is unsafe, why are EU carriers flying to that country? Therefore, I would like to see EU carriers stop flying to unsafe countries until the safety deficiencies are rectified. That would demonstrate sincerity on their part and show that this safety list is truly to help enhance safety, and not just to put African airlines at a competitive disadvantage.

AFRAA would like to see the EU playing a more constructive role in assisting states with safety deficiencies to reach world standards of safety. AFRAA would also prefer to see the EU adopting the established norm of letting all issues concerned with international air transport be dealt with by a neutral and trusted body, namely the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

**Q What is AFRAA doing to help African airlines?**

Since the EU blacklist does not positively contribute to airline safety, lacks objectivity and is not a reliable indicator of an airline's safety standards, AFRAA has suggested – and is participating in – the following initiatives which we believe are more useful alternatives to rectify safety deficiencies.

An aviation safety summit was convened for key decision-makers in Johannesburg on May 14-16 2012 by IATA and ICAO, together with the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), AFRAA, Aerial Navigation Safety in Africa and Madagascar (ASECNA), Air Traffic and Navigation Services (ATNS), Airlines Association of Southern Africa (AASA), Airports Council International (ACI), EASA, FAA, Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO), International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA), International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA), Boeing and Airbus.

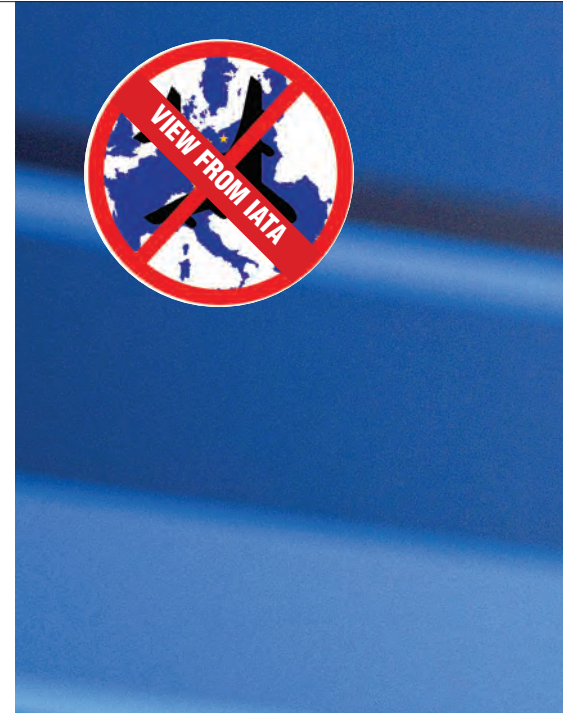
This meeting came up with an agreed Africa-Indian Ocean (AFI) strategic improvement action plan, which was approved in Abuja, Nigeria in July 2012 at a conference of ministers responsible for civil aviation and endorsed by African Union (AU) heads of states in January 2013. AFRAA is urging all African aviation stakeholders to fully implement the plan, with the following agreed strategic tasks to ensure that all countries and airlines are out of the banned list by 2015:

- Adoption and implementation of an effective and transparent regulatory oversight system;
- Implementation of runway safety measures;
- Training on preventing 'loss of control';
- Implementation of flight data analysis (FDA);
- Implementation of safety management systems (SMS).

AFRAA calls on African governments, AFCAC and the AU to take firm and decisive action on the growing number of African states on the EU list of banned airlines and to also engage the European Commission in a consensual dialogue aimed at establishing mutually agreed criteria for improving safety in the continent.

Africa has 39 airlines on the IOSA registry. IATA and AFRAA require that all their member airlines be IOSA certified to demonstrate that safety is the number one priority for member airlines.

AFRAA and IATA lobbied [African] states and it was agreed that they should make IOSA registration mandatory before issuing an air operator's certificate by 2015 to demonstrate to the world that African airlines adopt world-class best practices in safety. AFRAA and IATA are helping airlines obtain IOSA certification through training programmes and workshops on safety.



The European Union's blacklist of foreign carriers lacks transparency and is yet another example of Brussels making up its own rules instead of pursuing international standards, IATA director general Tony Tyler has told *African Aerospace*.

"What they should be doing – like everybody else in the world – is going with what [the United Nations' aviation agency] ICAO does, which is a global standard," he said.

"ICAO does its own inspections of the regulatory authorities and helps them lift their game where necessary. But Europe is going off on its own again, as it seems to love doing in this industry."

IATA has previously criticised the EU for unilaterally imposing its emissions trading system (ETS) – a climate change levy that was partly suspended last year amid warnings that it could trigger a global trade war.

But, unlike the ETS, Europe's blacklist specifically handicaps African operators. Fifteen of the 20 states subject to a blanket ban are in Africa – Angola, Benin, Congo Brazzaville, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Gabon, Liberia, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Swaziland and Zambia.

Further restrictions on entering EU airspace apply to individual carriers in Ghana, Comoros and Madagascar.

Tyler warned that the EU's disproportionate focus on Africa has led many observers to conclude that its blacklist "is a mercantile policy masquerading as a safety policy". He said that a lack of transparency only fuels these concerns.

"There are no clear guidelines on what you have to do to get off the banned list... or, indeed, how exactly you got on it," he complained. "In America, if [aviation regulator] the FAA says



**“There are no clear guidelines on what you have to do to get off the banned list... or, indeed, how exactly you got on it.”**

**TONY TYLER**

## Need for international standards...not double standards

you're Category 2, then it identifies what particular tests you have failed, or what you're not doing properly. But in Europe there is no checklist. There are no specifications about what standards they want."

Anger at EU policy has spread beyond the blacklisted countries themselves. The Libyan Civil Aviation Authority agreed to implement "voluntary restrictions" last year, withdrawing its airlines from EU airspace to avoid a formal ban. Its precautionary measure followed criticism of the investigation into the May 2010 crash of an Afriqiyah Airways Airbus A330.

But, speaking to *African Aerospace* shortly before the restrictions were extended in July, Afriqiyah chairman Emhemed Elwani made clear his frustration over the ban. "What is voluntary about it? We are ready [to resume flights to Europe]," he said. "They will not tell us what should change."

The latest update of the EU blacklist pointed to unspecified "progress" by the Libyan authorities in raising standards, but it gave no details about the recertification process.

Tyler said that maintaining the Libyan ban,

despite the country's vocal objections, "does turn the 'voluntary' thing round on its head a little bit". More to the point, however, he noted that Afriqiyah has passed the IATA operational safety audit (IOSA), the global benchmark for aviation safety. This underscores how the EU's concerns lie with Libya's regulators, rather than its airlines.

"What they say is that IOSA is private sector, and we deal with governments," he explained. "If the EU is not satisfied that the government is exercising adequate regulatory oversight, then it does not let airlines from those countries operate into its airspace.

"But, of course, the point that all the African airlines make – and that we certainly agree with – is that if a government isn't exercising sufficient regulatory oversight on aviation, then that applies equally to air navigation service, ground service and everything else. So if it's not safe for the African carrier to operate into Europe, then why is it safe for the European carrier to operate to the African country?"

Noting that the Libyan Government has its hands full with post-war reconstruction – "keeping their people fed and watered has to be a

rather higher priority" – Tyler said IOSA remains the best framework for improving African aviation standards.

Rather than penalising under-performing countries, IATA's approach is, therefore, to engage with non-IOSA carriers.

Operational staff from 10 African airlines are currently working on the IOSA implementation training programme – a three-phase initiative geared towards fostering a safety culture and introducing best practices. They are Afric Aviation, Air Côte d'Ivoire, ASKY, CAA, Camair-Co, Equajet, Mauritania Airlines, RwandAir, Senegal Airlines and Starbow.

Each phase involves a five-day workshop, followed by a six-week interval for corrective action. Seven carriers will complete the programme this year, followed by three in the first quarter of 2014. IOSA certificates are provided after compliance assessments.

The programme is a vital tool for fulfilling last year's Abuja declaration on aviation safety in Africa, which aims to bring the continent's accident rate in line with global averages by 2015. It is currently 18 times higher. Mindful of the fact that 80% of air accidents between 2008 and 2010 involved non-IOSA carriers, the declaration calls for IOSA certification to be compulsory in Africa.

Even as IATA focuses on providing assistance, however, the EU's strategy of blacklisting airlines and isolating foreign authorities looks set to continue.

"They claim that everyone else in the world tacitly supports them... so they're going to carry on," Tyler sighed. "But we do have some minor tactical victories from time to time. By keeping the pressure on the European regulators, we do make progress."

**“Europe is going off on its own again, as it seems to love doing in this industry.”**



SOMMAIRE

*L'une des questions majeures à l'agenda de la 45ème assemblée générale annuelle de l'African Airlines Association (AFRAA) prévue du 24 au 26 novembre au Kenya sera la très controversée liste noire de l'Union européenne, appelée désormais liste de sécurité. Avant que les débats s'ouvrent à Mombasa, Victoria Moores a rencontré le Docteur Elijah Chingosho, secrétaire général de l'AFRAA, pour recueillir l'opinion des compagnies africaines ainsi que celles des autorités de la Commission européenne afin de savoir davantage sur son mode opératoire ainsi que les modalités de sa mise à jour.*

# Un ticket pour l'Europe

Depuis 2006, la Commission européenne publie chaque semestre la liste des transporteurs aériens faisant l'objet d'une interdiction d'exploitation dans l'Union européenne (UE). Même si la sécurité reste la priorité absolue pour l'ensemble des acteurs de l'industrie aéronautique, cette fameuse liste fait l'objet de nombreuses critiques, non pas pour son existence mais pour son impact négatif et le manque de transparence par rapport aux critères d'inclusion ou du retrait d'un pays ou d'une compagnie aérienne.

La Commission européenne a effectué la 21ème mise à jour de sa liste de sécurité en juillet dernier. On dénombre parmi les 280 compagnies aériennes dans le monde inscrites sur cette liste, 147 transporteurs africains. Cette situation donne une impression d'insécurité et jette un discrédit sur l'ensemble du continent. Or la réalité est différente.

Le Docteur Elijah Chingosho, secrétaire général de l'AFRAA émet de sérieuses réserves sur la diffusion de cette liste de sécurité de l'UE car elle est très dommageable pour l'ensemble du secteur de l'aviation africaine au-delà des compagnies aériennes ciblées ou des Etats.

Que reproche-t-on alors à cette liste? Déjà, elle engendre de grandes difficultés économiques et financières et place les compagnies aériennes africaines dans une situation concurrentielle désavantageuse par rapport à leurs homologues européens au moment où le trafic intercontinental entre l'Afrique et l'Europe est très largement dominé par les transporteurs européens, Air France ayant par exemple un quasi monopole sur l'Afrique de l'ouest francophone et la main mise sur le trafic en Centrafrique.

Le processus d'y mettre ou d'enlever un pays ou une compagnie aérienne n'est pas transparent selon l'AFRAA et ne constitue pas un indicateur fiable des normes de sécurité d'une compagnie aérienne.

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Le caractère unilatéral de la décision d'interdire suscite aussi de sérieuses doutes quant à son équité et son impartialité. Un seul pays en Afrique, à savoir la Mauritanie, a été retiré de la liste depuis 2006 malgré l'amélioration des normes de sécurité en Afrique. Une grande majorité des compagnies aériennes présentes sur la liste n'existent pas ou n'existent que sur papier. Sur les 147 compagnies aériennes africaines figurant sur la liste de l'UE, une demi-douzaine seulement desservent l'Europe ou avaient l'intention de le faire. Elle intègre des transporteurs internationaux comme Air Madagascar et LAM Mozambique qui ont d'excellentes références en terme de sécurité. Les statistiques ont également montré que ces transporteurs n'ont jamais eu d'accidents graves au cours des 30 dernières années. Si l'on prend par exemple le cas d'Air France, la compagnie française a enregistré 23 accidents majeurs depuis 1990.

Il est également pertinent de se demander pourquoi les transporteurs européens desservent des aéroports d'un pays ne disposant pas d'une sécurité optimale. Si un pays ou un aéroport est dangereux pour les compagnies aériennes africaines, il l'est également pour les transporteurs de l'UE. Or ces dernières en profitent pour augmenter leurs fréquences,

conquérir des parts de marché et capitaliser sur le vacuum. Les compagnies africaines sont ainsi pénalisées. Cette pratique ressemble parfois à une manipulation de l'intérêt politique et économique. Ladite liste a aussi des impacts négatifs sur les activités des compagnies africaines vers d'autres destinations ou des marchés hors de l'Europe où elles tentent de se développer. Leurs ventes de billets dans les pays de l'UE diminuent également et leurs partenaires en partage de codes limitent leur coopération. Elle est aussi devenue un outil commercial pour ternir l'image de l'aviation africaine et donner un avantage concurrentiel aux transporteurs de l'UE. De plus il n'est pas logique d'interdire des transporteurs qui n'existent que sur papier ou un pays comme le Libéria qui n'a pas de compagnie aérienne.

L'AFRAA souhaite voir l'UE jouer un rôle plus constructif en aidant les États à réduire leur manque de sécurité et à atteindre les normes de sécurité internationales. L'association préférerait également voir l'UE adopter la norme établie et que les questions concernant le transport aérien international soient traitées dans un esprit de confiance directement par l'organisation de l'aviation civile internationale (l'OACI).

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L'AFRAA mène donc de nombreuses initiatives qu'elle considère comme des alternatives plus concrètes pour aider les compagnies aériennes africaines. Le sommet sur la sécurité aérienne de Johannesburg en mai 2012 en est un bel exemple. Il aboutit à un plan d'action stratégique entériné en janvier dernier. L'AFRAA encourage les acteurs de l'aviation en Afrique d'appliquer ce plan pour veiller à ce que les pays et les compagnies sortent de cette liste noire d'ici 2015. L'IATA et l'AFRAA font par ailleurs pression pour que les compagnies membres soient certifiées IOSA afin de démontrer que la sécurité et les meilleures pratiques sont leurs priorités. L'AFRAA et IATA aident ainsi les compagnies aériennes dans l'obtention de cette certification à travers des programmes de formation et des ateliers de travail. Elles exhortent toutes les parties prenantes de l'aviation africaine à mettre en œuvre un système de surveillance réglementaire efficace et transparent, des mesures de sécurité sur les pistes de même que des systèmes de gestion de la sécurité.

Une représentante officielle s'est exprimée sur le mode opératoire de l'UE pour répondre à ces nombreuses critiques. Selon elle, l'UE veille au respect des normes de l'OACI et sont inscrites dans la loi. L'OACI contrôle le processus de mise en place et la conformité de ces normes avec les règlements internationaux. « Ce que l'UE fait en plus, c'est de savoir si cela fonctionne. Elle a une approche très rationnelle pour s'assurer que le système de sécurité en place fonctionne de manière durable », souligne-t-elle.

Les autorités européennes soulignent qu'il existe une réelle volonté de la part des autorités africaines à améliorer leurs bilans en matière de sécurité aérienne et de surveillance. Les décisions de la

Commission européenne sur la mise à jour de la liste de sécurité se fondent sur l'avis unanime du comité de la sécurité aérienne qui réunit des experts de chacun des 28 États membres de l'UE, de la Norvège, de l'Islande, de la Suisse et de l'AESA.

Siim Kallas, vice-président de la Commission européenne chargé des transports, a déclaré à ce sujet en juillet dernier : « La liste des transporteurs aériens faisant l'objet d'une interdiction d'exploitation ou de restrictions d'exploitation dans l'UE a été créée dans le but de protéger l'espace aérien et les citoyens de l'UE, mais elle peut également servir d'avertissement aux pays et aux transporteurs aériens dont la situation en matière de sécurité aérienne laisse à désirer. Nous avons confirmé aujourd'hui notre volonté de retirer de la liste des pays et des transporteurs aériens qui ont fait preuve d'une grande détermination et d'une réelle capacité à mettre en œuvre les normes internationales de sécurité de manière durable. Outre les Philippines, le Venezuela et la Mauritanie, plusieurs pays d'Afrique ont également accompli des progrès satisfaisants en la matière. »

L'UE a salué les progrès et les efforts déployés en matière de sécurité par la République démocratique du Congo, la Libye, la Mauritanie, le Mozambique ou encore le Soudan.

D'autre part l'expert apporte un démenti catégorique quant à l'existence d'un agenda économique derrière la politique de l'UE ou que la liste de sécurité soit utilisée comme un outil marketing. « Si vous regardez la législation, il n'y a pas de critères économiques. L'UE prend des décisions basées uniquement sur la sécurité et sur la résolution des problèmes. » La Commission européenne souhaite également conseiller les Européens qui voyagent à l'étranger avec des compagnies aériennes qui ne répondent pas aux critères de sécurité en Europe. Concernant l'opération des compagnies de l'UE desservant les pays soumis à une interdiction totale, l'expert affirme que ces dernières sont bien conscientes de la situation et du risque et prennent les mesures nécessaires avec le soutien de leurs équipes sur place.

Selon l'expert l'un des facteurs clés pour sortir de cette liste de sécurité est de nouer un véritable dialogue entre l'UE, les compagnies aériennes et les autorités civiles des pays concernés. l'AESA a également un rôle important dans ce processus. « Une compagnie aérienne et les autorités compétentes doivent démontrer que le problème de sécurité a été reconnu et résolu. La Mauritanie ne figure plus sur la liste car les autorités ont pris des mesures appropriées pour résoudre les problèmes et fourni toutes les informations dont nous avions besoin. »

Même la sécurité reste un sacerdoce pour l'ensemble des acteurs de l'industrie aéronautique, le débat sur la liste de sécurité européenne fera couler encore beaucoup d'encre. Toutefois il ne faut pas se focaliser uniquement sur cette liste mais se concentrer davantage sur les capacités techniques, marketing et financières des compagnies aériennes et la politique des pays en matière de développement du transport aérien.

Le caractère unilatéral de la décision d'interdire suscite aussi de sérieux doutes quant à son équité et son impartialité.



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Mark Spicer, and (inset) with his adopted daughter, whose name literally translates as 'Miracle'.

# MARK'S BLUESKY MIRACLE

**Victoria Moores** *meets BlueSky Airways managing director Mark Spicer, the man responsible for introducing the Boeing 737 into Botswana.*

**M**ark Spicer admits to being “a bit of a visionary” at heart. “When we introduced the 737 into Flying Mission Services (FMS), it was a bit of a jump,” he said.

Until that point, Christian missionary service FMS had operated single-engine Cessna 206s and 210s, gently progressing up to a twin-engine Cessna 421 and a Beechcraft King Air.

It is fair to describe the 102-seat 737-200 as “a bit of a jump”.

Spicer, an American, kicked off his aviation career in 1985 as a flight instructor, before switching to commercial flying with Atlanta-based regional Atlantic Southeast Airlines (ASA).

He relocated to Botswana in 1992 as a self-supported Christian volunteer and definitely felt the jump from American to African life. “It was like taking a step back in time,” he recalled. “The people had a very simple lifestyle but they were very friendly. At first we lived in a village to learn the culture, language and to develop relationships. We have some very strong ties here now.”

It was then that Spicer joined Gaborone-based FMS, a non-profit organisation that performed church, mission and medical flights to distant and inaccessible areas of Botswana, supporting hospitals and working on development projects



**BlueSky thinking - The people and the aircraft behind the reinvention of the missionary service and the launch of an airline..**

such as installing water pumps in remote villages. “During those first five years it was all single-engine Cessna stuff. At our peak, we had about eight aircraft and we acquired our first twin-engine Cessna 421 in 1997, so we were quite big even in the 1990s,” said Spicer, who managed FMS from 1995 until 2001.

Ironically, it was Spicer’s strong ties to Botswana that ultimately forced him to quit FMS and return to the States in 2001. “We adopted a little girl, who was in a car accident when she was 10 days old. She suffered head injuries, so we went back to America so she could receive treatment that was not available in Botswana.”

Spicer then clocked up another five years of regional flying for ASA before returning to Botswana. “After 10 years living here, we felt more at home in Botswana than we did in America. It was a whole different lifestyle and attitude. We knew that if ever we had the opportunity to come back, we would take it.”

Meanwhile, FMS continued its work, but in 2005 Botswana’s medical flying was put out to tender and FMS lost the contract that it had held for 25 years.

Botswana had also moved on, with improved roads and a dwindling need for aerial mission work, although there was still demand for medical flights.

This meant FMS had to be reinvented as a profit-making commercial operation and Spicer was asked to oversee the transformation as co-managing director. “When I returned in May 2006, the company was struggling. We had one Cessna 206, one Cessna 421, no contracts and no work. Now, in 2013, FMS is operating eight aircraft. We managed to get the Ministry of Health contract back and the company is doing private medical flying, as well as charter and maintenance work,” he said.



The Cessna 421, which needed new engines, ceded its place to FMS’s first King Air at the end of 2006. The fleet has since grown to four single-engine Cessnas, which fly tourists out of FMS’s Maun base, and four King Airs that perform air ambulance work for the government and fly medical teams to major clinics across Botswana.

Spicer describes this community support work as one of the most fulfilling jobs he has ever had.

In 2007, Spicer encouraged the ministry of transport to allow private Botswana air operators to offer flights to destinations not served by Air Botswana. This idea was discussed at a government-sponsored symposium, which was

attended by most of the country’s travel and tourism players. “The majority of response was very much in favour,” said Spicer. In 2008, the government agreed to open the market, but it took three years for it to actually come into effect.

This is where the 737 comes in. Spicer is definitely not one to shy away from a challenge and he admits that he gets a boost from building things up from scratch. “I love that kind of stuff,” he confessed.

So, when a 737-200 operator approached him in 2010, asking whether he wanted to lease the aircraft and put it on FMS’s air operator’s certificate (AOC), he jumped at the opportunity. “I wanted to avoid the same situation as before. I wanted to diversify. It seemed like a big jump but after investigating available technical support, I thought let’s go for it.” Spicer imported Botswana’s first 737 in November 2011.

However, the story does not end there. The 737 was, indeed, a “bit of a jump” for FMS and the mission insisted that the 737 operations should be performed under a separate brand. This led to the creation of BlueSky Airways.

On July 15 this year, Spicer resigned from his position as FMS managing director to take up full-

**Continued on Page 28**





The King Airs provide the backbone to the medicare services.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

time leadership of BlueSky. “FMS is well-established. It has a good operations manager, a good chief pilot and a good chief engineer. If ever there was a time to leave FMS, it is now. I am very excited about the future for BlueSky Airways and I am now able to focus all my attention and energy on it,” he said.

They say that patience is a virtue. Well, Spicer has certainly needed plenty of patience to persist with his plans for BlueSky since he opened discussions for the 737s in 2010. “Although the government was very enthusiastic about introducing the aircraft, they were going through a period of new regulations so the licencing process was quite delayed. It took the CAA nearly a year-and-a-half to get the aircraft operational once it had arrived in the country. The owners of the aircraft gave us a good lease rate, so it actually wasn’t as bad as it could have been, but there was quite a lot of initial investment, training pilots and cabin crew. Everyone was in place, so it was a bit of an expense.”

The 737 has since been completely phased out of FMS’s operation, which is now focused on medical and general aviation operations. It will be sent to South Africa for maintenance work before returning to Botswana to perform some demonstration flights for the CAA. “We are just in the process of licencing now. We’ve started the AOC process and hope to be done by the end of September,” said Spicer. “I feel it is time for Botswana to have another airline. We have generated a lot of interest and we have already been speaking with other international operators who want to interline or codeshare with us.”

BlueSky will primarily focus on scheduled operations and Spicer is hoping to establish Gaborone as a regional hub. “Obviously we can never replace Johannesburg but it is busy and we feel that a satellite hub has huge potential. We are looking at flying from Gaborone to the capitals of the surrounding countries but that will take us a couple of years to grow into. We will start with

three cities and go from there, depending on bilateral restrictions. We are working with the CAA and as they go to bilateral talks, they will negotiate on our behalf. Our first route will probably be Gaborone-Cape Town. That link is already served by the national carrier but we would operate a different schedule.”

Spicer is already in talks with the owners of the existing aircraft and other lessors for another two 737s, with potential to upgrade to -300s or -400s. “We will use the -200 to start with but as we go forward we want something more fuel-efficient. A lot of people say don’t go with the -200 but this is a late model, which is in very good shape with a business and economy section. We are not going to be a premium carrier but we won’t be a low-cost carrier either. We want to offer a comfortable, quality service, which is currently missing in airline operations in our part of the world.”

**“We want to offer a comfortable, quality service, which is currently missing in airline operations in our part of the world.”**

BlueSky also plans to operate domestic routes using small turboprops, such as the Embraer 120 or Saab 340. “It will be something along those lines, fuel-efficient, reasonably fast and pressurised, with a cabin attendant,” said Spicer. “The Embraer 120 works quite well but the problem is a lot of them are quite old and we are looking for a recent example. I flew the Embraer 120 early on in my airline career, with ASA in the late 80s, so I know it is a good aircraft for our needs.”

Spicer is a co-owner of BlueSky, alongside local businessmen Chris Garland and Julian Scales, who both own aircraft and are aviation enthusiasts. “We will be looking for potential financial partners to sell off some of our equity. If another airline thought we could give them a strategic advantage, and wanted to be a financial partner, we would absolutely look at that.”

In a rather unlikely twist, the president of Botswana is also an aviation enthusiast. He is the patron of the Kalahari Flying Club, enjoys powered parachuting and apparently often flies his presidential aircraft. “He does as much flying as possible and is very vocal about aviation. I have

been at aviation conferences that the president has attended. He has a very strong interest in aviation,” said Spicer. This can only be positive for the start-up.

Beyond their shared personal passion for flying, the three BlueSky owners are all Christians and they agree that the company should also ultimately do some non-profit work. “Chris, Julian and I have a strong drive to help people. We want to be more than just an airline,” explained Spicer. “Just look at South Sudan. It is a reasonably new country with around 130 NGOs, which definitely need aviation. There are already airlines flying into South Sudan but there is a need for an airline based in the country as well, and we are looking into this possibility for BlueSky.”

The start-up is also considering ways it can offer practical support to non-profit and church-related bodies, which Spicer knows from personal experience are often poorly-funded and under-supported.



Spicer said Botswana has changed dramatically since he first arrived back in 1992. “It is like night and day. Now there are huge shopping malls in Gaborone. It is just really, really growing. We now have a very developed capital city but this is a country of contrasts. If you drive 100km you find very rural villages, where people still use donkeys and carts and oxen to plough the fields. That’s what I like, that diversity. We have a good, stable Government and the president has a lot of vision.”

Despite this high-level enthusiasm, getting BlueSky off the ground will undoubtedly involve further challenges. But, if Spicer ever has any doubts about overcoming the odds, he need look no further than his adopted daughter, whose name literally translates as ‘Miracle’.

Following the car accident, the doctors said she would never be able to see, walk, talk or feed herself. She is now 12 and has proven the doctors wrong by doing all the things they said she would never be able to do.

“She has come so far, she has a great personality and a sense of humour that keeps people laughing,” said Spicer. In comparison, the “bit of a jump” to 737s seems like child’s play.



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*Air Zimbabwe has returned to the skies following a successful IOSA safety audit and the signing of new aircraft leases, but the glory days of Air Rhodesia are unlikely to return soon.*

**Martin Rivers** speaks to acting CEO Innocent Mavhunga (right).



**A**lthough Zimbabwe's GDP per capita remains the second lowest in the world, the decision to abandon its local currency in 2009 brought a welcome end to hyperinflation. Economic growth has averaged 7.5% since 'dollarisation' and, amid slow but steady progress, the Government is focusing again on its ailing flag-carrier.

Air Zimbabwe resumed domestic services in April of this year, restoring links from capital city Harare to Victoria Falls and Bulawayo. The fleet had been grounded in February 2012, shortly after two aircraft were seized in Johannesburg and London over alleged non-payment of debts.

Acting CEO Innocent Mavhunga accepts that challenges persist – among them over-staffing, fuel-inefficiency of the fleet, and a precarious domestic economy – but he is confident the airline has embarked on the right path.

"We are slowly reclaiming our routes, both in the region and internationally," he said, noting that Johannesburg flights are also under way. "We hope to restore normal operations over the next six to 12 months. The Government is quite keen to continue supporting the airline. In the future that could include purchasing aircraft, certainly, but for now we will lease them."



Even securing leases on aircraft is an achievement given Air Zimbabwe's past indiscretions. Since returning to the skies, two Airbus A320s and one Embraer 145 have joined the fleet on operating leases. Another E-145 is expected imminently, while the owned fleet still comprises three 737-200s, two 767-200ERs and three Xian MA60.

Just one of each western-built type is in service – underscoring low demand in the impoverished country – and none of the Chinese-made aircraft are being used. The last functioning 737 will be retired "soon", Mavhunga affirmed, most likely when the second A320 enters service.

But financial uncertainty appears to be blocking the airline from making long-term commitments about its future fleet. The A320s have only been contracted for "about three



# The falls and rise of Air Zimbabwe...



**Air Zimbabwe has a number of Embraer 145s on short-term leases.**

years", while the E-145s are on "very short leases" of perhaps as little as 12 months.

Mavhunga stresses that Air Zimbabwe is "still looking at various options" for the regional network. The MA60s could be re-deployed on short-haul routes, for example, though the type's safety record has come under scrutiny following a spate of incidents this year.

There are "no urgent plans" to retire the 767-200ERs from the wide-body fleet, with Air Zimbabwe, instead, refurbishing them ahead of November's planned resumption of London flights. "To start with we have to fly to London with

the 767-200ER," Mavhunga said. "Eventually we will replace them. We are still considering various options – the A330 and 777 are possibilities."

Asked about the commercial viability of the Harare-London route, which will compete with connecting services through Johannesburg, he insisted: "The demand is there... passengers prefer direct flights and currently there is no direct flight into Harare, so we believe the market is there."

The acting CEO made no mention of the A380, which one Air Zimbabwe spokesperson subsequently claimed was being acquired by the airline. Harare International Airport lacks the infrastructure to



support the double-decker jet and previous claims disseminated by the authorities – notably a 2010 report that Air Zimbabwe was acquiring two A340s – turned out to be publicity stunts.

Whatever form the fleet takes over the coming years, Mavhunga is adamant that flights to London Gatwick Airport will be the catalyst for restoring the flag-carrier’s international reputation. “That’s what we’ll focus on,” he said, downplaying expectations of additional long-haul routes in the near-term. “We are starting with London and we’ll see how we do there.”

In the mid- to long-term, Mavhunga confirmed that Beijing would be the next probable intercontinental link. Demand exists on the route due to China’s extensive development work in Zimbabwe, but operating the service profitably with ageing 767-200ERs will, again, present challenges.

New regional services will be rolled out sooner, with all the “usual [southern African] destinations” being considered for the 2014 summer schedule. These include Durban, Lilongwe, Lubumbashi and Lusaka. “But we have to do it gradually,” Mavhunga emphasised. “We cannot do it all at once.”

The west African nations of Ghana and Nigeria will be looked at “in future, certainly, but not for now”.



With network expansion advancing at a modest pace, Mavhunga said that codeshares and partnerships would play an increasingly important role for the airline. They are “the way to go”, he insisted. “We are open to [talks with] any regional players.”

One major problem for Air Zimbabwe’s turnaround plan is continued over-staffing at the flag-carrier. More than 600 employees – two-thirds of the workforce – were put on forced leave during the summer. But the prospect of permanent labour restructuring is unclear, with chairman Ozias Bvute warning that he is “not in a position to conduct retrenchment”.

Industrial action had plagued Air Zimbabwe in the run-up to last year’s grounding.

The direct benefits of its new fleet also have yet to be independently assessed. Bvute claims that the Airbus jets have cut operating costs at the flag-carrier by 45% but precise financial details have not been forthcoming. Zimbabwean media outlets frequently complain of inefficient practices at the airline.

Despite the challenges, Air Zimbabwe remains a symbolically potent tool for the government.

Just one month after its July general election, Zimbabwe and Zambia co-hosted the 20th session of the United Nations World Tourism Organization.

The exodus of foreign airlines that accompanied the disintegration of the economy is also unlikely to be reversed soon. KLM resumed services in October 2012, but former operators British Airways, Lufthansa, Air France and Qantas show no sign of following suit.

However, Zimbabwe’s selection to host the Routes Africa 2014 aviation conference at least points to simmering interest within the industry. If political and economic reforms continue to advance, and if Mavhunga succeeds in scaling up Air Zimbabwe’s network, then once-popular attractions like Victoria Falls and the country’s many game safaris could again serve as a magnet for overseas visitors.

“For decades, Air Zimbabwe has fought gallantly to stay afloat in spite of being adversely affected by the country’s economic and political situation,” concluded Nick Fadugba, former secretary general of AFRAA.

“It inherited sound technical and operational skills and facilities from the Air Rhodesia days, but these have now been severely depleted. Nonetheless, Zimbabwe has tremendous economic and tourism potential and, once the political climate changes, Air Zimbabwe is likely to bounce back – as long as it can survive the next few years,” he said.



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*For the Islamist rebels sweeping south through Mali, it must have seemed as though victory was in their grasp. The poorly equipped Malian army had broken before them. The road to the capital, Bamako, was open. Then air power, and Operation Serval, named after a local cat (pictured right), changed the picture almost overnight. Alan Dron reports.*



# 'WILDCAT' STRIKES TO RESCUE MALI

«La puissance internationale aérienne au secours du Mali» – Page 39

**T**he column of pick-up trucks, mounting Soviet-vintage heavy machine guns and packed with heavily armed jihadist troops, was approaching the town of Konna, on the banks of the River Niger, some 500km northeast of Bamako.

The noise of their engines masked the approaching whine of Turbomeca Astazou turboshafts. By the time the rebels spotted the Eurocopter Gazelles of France's 4th Special Forces Helicopter Regiment, it was too late.

A fusillade of 20mm cannon shells swept the column, exploding on metal and bodies. Within a few moments the insurgents were in retreat, leaving oily black smoke rising slowly into the Saharan sky from four burning vehicles.

The damage was not all on one side. A Gazelle pilot was hit by return fire from the convoy and died later of his wounds.

That night, the Armée de l'Air stepped up its activities. Four Dassault Mirage 2000Ds operating from N'Djamena, the capital of Chad, supported by two C-135FR air-to-air refuellers, dropped laser-guided 228kg bombs on jihadist targets in the north of Mali.

N'Djamena was, at the time, host not only to six Mirage 2000Ds and three of the tankers but also two Mirage F1 CR reconnaissance aircraft, a Lockheed Martin C-130H Hercules and a Transall C160, as part of Operation Epervier ('Sparrowhawk'), the long-term French military presence in Chad.

Simultaneously, a C-130 and Transall flew some 200 French troops from the Epervier task group to Bamako from N'Djamena.

This was only the start of international air power playing a major role in throwing back the Islamic extremists.

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**T**he problems brewing in the northern half of Mali throughout 2012 had aroused little interest outside the immediate region.

A few articles on the inside pages of the serious press had talked of the Ansar Dine movement, which is linked to Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), joining up with the Tuareg separatist MNLA group to threaten the already unstable west African state, which had experienced a short-lived military coup d'état, followed by a weak transitional government.

The destruction of World Heritage sites in Timbuktu, in the centre of Mali, had aroused some outrage. The militants, with their strict interpretation of Islam, smashed an ancient door in the Sidi Yahya mosque that tradition decreed had to remain closed until the end of the world. They also desecrated mausoleums they considered 'unIslamic' because they contained shrines to Sufi saints.

But as the northern hemisphere closed down for the Christmas and New Year holidays, Mali still seemed a relatively insignificant problem.

It was the imminent threat to Bamako and the risk of Mali becoming a failed state under Al Qaeda control that triggered the first response.

France, with its long-standing political and economic presence in the region, had 5,000 citizens in Mali. Alarmed by the threat to them and to Mali's territorial integrity, it reacted swiftly when the country's Government, backed by the United Nations, appealed for help.



It promptly launched Operation Serval in support of the Malian armed forces. The name was well chosen. The serval is a wild cat found in a wide swathe of sub-Saharan Africa. It is notable for making precisely judged leaps on to prey with a high kill ratio when it does so. As the rebels quickly discovered, that was a quality shared by the Dassault Rafales and Mirage 2000Ds of the L'Armée de l'Air.

Nevertheless, France could not get intervention forces to west Africa by itself. Requests for help went to London, Ottawa and Washington. The French military had a particular requirement for heavy airlift capacity, as the largest transport currently in the French inventory is the C-130. (That situation will improve as Armée de l'Air transport units receive the Airbus A400M Atlas.)

Within 48 hours two British Boeing C-17 Globemaster IIIs were at Evreux, near Paris, embarking troops and vehicles for Bamako under what the British referred to as Operation Newcombe. The following day, Canada also provided a Globemaster (CC-177 in Canadian terminology), which began flying more vehicles, medical supplies and ammunition from Evreux. The US Air Force joined in on January 21 with up to five C-17s engaged in initially transporting a French mechanised infantry battalion from Istres-Le Tubé air base in southern France.



Given the scale of resources available to it, the US provided a large percentage of air transport capabilities; taking a snapshot of one week in March, for example, US C-17s flew 47 missions from France to Mali, transporting 975 personnel and around 1200 tonnes of supplies.

The Netherlands also made a significant contribution on the transport front: initially the Dutch Government dispatched a Royal Netherlands Air Force KDC-10 tanker/transport. A second was added later, together with four C-130 Hercules plus a DC-10.

Additional transport capacity came from Belgium (two air component C-130H Hercules and two medical component Agusta A109 helicopters for medevac missions); Denmark (one C-130J-30 Super Hercules); Germany

(three Transall C-160 plus an Airbus A310 MRTT air-to-air refueller; Spain (one C-130 Hercules plus one C-295 tactical transport for troop movements within Mali); and Sweden (one C-17 from the NATO Strategic Airlift Capability Heavy Airlift Wing at Pápa Air Base in Hungary).

Notable additions from outside Europe were two C-17s of the UAE Air Force, which helped transport men and materiel from France to Mali.

France also committed further assets, in the form of an Airbus A310 and A340, plus two SA330 Puma helicopters for combat search and rescue missions.

Keeping the strike aircraft flying, US Air Force KC-135 Stratotankers in that same week flew 85 refuelling missions, offloading more than 500,000 US gallons of fuel to French combat



International support from Canada, the USA, Britain and the Netherlands assisted the French forces.

aircraft. This was, somewhat depressingly from the European perspective, another reminder of the relative paucity of air-to-air tankers in their inventories.

French Air Force Commandant Lionel Vantard, Joint Force Air Component Lyon, spelt out their importance: “The fighters are based at airfields far from ground operations for security reasons and the aircraft would not have enough fuel to transit between bases and the operations area without air refuelling.

“Without US Air Force refuelling support, the French Air Force would lose about 50% of their daily fighter sorties.”

By May 15, reported the US publication *Air Force Times*, the US Air Force’s 351st Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron, forward

deployed to Morón airbase, Spain, and RAF Mildenhall, in the UK, had offloaded more than eight million pounds of fuel in 204 separate missions in support of the French.

As well as the Mirages already in Chad, France deployed Dassault Rafale combat aircraft direct from France on the night of January 13. Flying direct from St Dizier in northeast France, four Rafales were refuelled in the air no fewer than six times during an epic mission of just under 10 hours that saw them dropping GBU-12 laser-guided bombs and AASM Hammer precision-guided munitions on multiple targets in and around Gao before recovering to N’Djamena.

Once settled into their new deployed base, the Rafales undertook a mix of close air support and reconnaissance missions against the insurgents in

a campaign that bolstered the aircraft’s credentials as a combat-proven platform.

Over the next few weeks, the small contingent of French fixed- and rotary-wing assets supported its ground contingent, helped by Malian and Chadian troops in a series of ground-air operations to seize infrastructure, such as the airport and bridge, over the River Niger at Gao.

Further air strikes were made on rebel concentrations around Gao and Timbuktu, with almost 30 sorties mounted within 36 hours. The Rafales and Mirages also conducted strikes on enemy logistics depots, training camps and vehicles. By June, the Mirage 2000Ds had conducted 435 missions and clocked up 2,200 flight hours in the campaign.

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Hercules and Transall flights in-theatre supported the French ground presence, which reached almost 4,000 personnel at its peak. More than 6,000 African troops, from Mali and other nations, were also supplied as they pursued the retreating Islamists into the barren reaches of northern Mali.

Harassing fire from insurgents along the French axis of advance was dealt with by a combination of the VAB wheeled armoured vehicles airlifted in by the C-17s and by the French combat jet force, which increased to 14 at one point.

French helicopters were also in action, airlifting personnel wounded in the fighting to advanced military surgical units for treatment before they were flown back to France.

As in any campaign, intelligence of the enemy's intentions was vital. Fortuitously, the US earlier this year had quietly opened a base in Niamey, the capital of neighbouring Niger, from which to deploy Predator and Reaper unmanned aerial vehicles. These now started to prowl the skies over eastern Mali, searching out remaining groups of enemy troops.

As well as watching Malian insurgents, the UAVs were also used to monitor the cross-border movement of fighters from Nigeria's Boko Haram Islamic terrorists in support of AQIM.

France also deployed two of its Harfang UAVs to N'Djamena, together with a further two KC-135s

A more powerful intelligence-gathering tool

was also to hand. The UK quietly deployed one of its Sentinel R1 aircraft into Dakar, Senegal, west of Mali.

The Sentinel, a heavily modified Bombardier Global Challenger, carries a highly sophisticated dual-mode radar in a large canoe-shaped fairing beneath the fuselage. This produces synthetic aperture radar (SAR) imagery and ground moving target indicator (GMTI) data.



The SAR takes a photographic-quality picture of a swathe of territory beneath the aircraft, while the GMTI, as its name suggests, shows its operators anything that is moving on the ground. The Sentinel was accompanied to Dakar by a transportable ground station, with datalinks between the two allowing near real-time intelligence to be passed to the French commanders in Mali.

Much of the aircraft's time was spent in building up an electronic picture of everyday activity around towns and villages – 'pattern of life' missions. These are used to see how a population is behaving and detecting anomalies or changes to those patterns. (In Afghanistan, for example, fewer people going to local markets can mean the Taliban are moving in and coercing the population. Traffic veering off a road for a few hundred metres before rejoining the carriageway tends to indicate that locals know an IED has been planted on the route.)

Sentinel provided the French with a capability they do not currently possess, with information downloaded from the aircraft fed to French intelligence. RAF crews on the deployment commented that they did not know precisely the use to which their information was being put. However, the UK had agreed the Sentinel would not be part of the 'kill chain'. There was an agreement that intelligence it provided would not be used to prosecute any targets that wouldn't be covered by the UK's rules of engagement.

Those rules meant there had to be a direct risk to friendly forces for the Sentinel's information to be used to prosecute targets. Essentially, it was deployed in a surveillance capacity, feeding 'pattern of life' information to troops on the ground.

The continuing demand for the Sentinel's capabilities in Afghanistan meant that crews had to be regularly rotated between these widely separated theatres. It was not uncommon for crews to exit one theatre of operations and be plunged straight into the other.

The situation is now similar to that in Afghanistan, although on a smaller scale. As always, western nations can easily throw back an open military assault by insurgents who emerge from the shadows to engage in conventional warfare.

Whether they can keep in check a low-level insurgency characterised by suicide bombers and roadside IEDs is much more problematic. Ultimately, much will depend on the attitude of the local population and which side they support.

**Dassault Rafale impressed  
with air strike successes.**







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SOMMAIRE

# La puissance internationale aérienne au secours du Mali

*La victoire semblait acquise pour les rebelles islamistes au nord du Mali qui avaient neutralisé l'armée malienne et se dirigeait vers Bamako. C'était sans compter sur la puissance aérienne internationale qui a changé la donne le lendemain. Une enquête d'Alan Dron.*

11 janvier 2013. L'opération militaire multinationale Serval est lancée au Mali. Son objectif : la mise en œuvre de la résolution 2085 du Conseil de sécurité des Nations Unies. Les problèmes gangrenant le nord du Mali suscitaient alors peu d'intérêt au delà de cette région dévastée.

Un conflit armé opposait pourtant dans le nord du pays, l'armée malienne aux rebelles touaregs du Mouvement National pour la Libération de l'Azawad (MNLA) et au mouvement salafiste Ansar Dine, alliés à d'autres mouvements islamistes.

Le MNLA revendique l'autodétermination et l'indépendance de l'Azawad, trois régions maliennes incluant Tombouctou, Gao et Kidal. La destruction des sites du patrimoine mondial de Tombouctou avait provoqué une certaine indignation. Alarmée par la menace imminente à l'intégrité territoriale du Mali et la possibilité de devenir un État sous le contrôle d'Al-Qaïda, la France a réagi rapidement lorsque le gouvernement malien, soutenu par les Nations Unies, a fait appel à l'aide. La France, qui dispose d'une présence politique et économique de longue date dans la région, comptait 5 000 de ses citoyens au Mali.



A French Mirage 2000 is refuelled by an USAF KC-135 tanker from RAF Mildenhall in the UK over the skies of Mali. Un Mirage 2000 français est ravitaillé par un USAF ravitailleur KC-135 de la RAF Mildenhall au Royaume-Uni dans le ciel du Mali.

□□□□□

L'Armée de l'Air française a engagé le combat aux côtés des forces maliennes contre les troupes djihadistes approchant de la ville de Konna à 500 kilomètres au nord-est de Bamako.

Les hélicoptères Gazelles du 4ème régiment de forces spéciales sont alors entrés en opération en balayant la colonne de blindés des djihadistes, suivis de quatre Mirage 2000D soutenus par deux avions ravitailleurs C-135FR provenant d'N'Djamena. La capitale tchadienne accueillait à l'époque 6 Mirage 2000D, trois pétroliers, deux avions de reconnaissance Mirage F1, un avion Hercules C-130H de Lockheed Martin dans le cadre de l'opération Epervier. Un avion de transport Transall C-130 a pu également acheminé 200 soldats français vers Bamako.

On n'était qu'au début des opérations et la France ne pouvait pas agir seule. La coopération de Londres, d'Ottawa et de Washington fut sollicitée surtout au niveau de la capacité du transport aérien, les forces armées françaises ne possédant pas encore l'Airbus A400M qui remplaceront les C-130 actuels. La puissance aérienne internationale a joué un rôle majeur dans la traque aux extrémistes islamiques à travers notamment la logistique et le renseignement.

Deux Boeing C-17 Globemaster III britanniques sont ainsi venus en renfort. Les États-Unis ont apporté

**Sans le soutien et les ravitaillements de l'US Air Force, l'armée de l'air française aurait perdu environ 50% de ses sorties quotidiennes.**

leur soutien pour le aérien avec cinq avions C-17. Le Canada, les Pays-Bas, la Belgique, le Danemark, l'Allemagne, l'Espagne et la Suède ont également contribué significativement aux opérations. Deux C-17 de l'Armée de l'Air des Émirats arabes unis y ont aussi participé.

Il est intéressant de souligner que les avions KC-135 de l'US Air Force ont effectué 83 missions de ravitaillement dans les airs pour les avions de combat français, une aide américaine capitale selon le commandant de l'Armée de l'Air, Lionel Vantard. « Les combattants sont basés sur les aérodromes loin des opérations au sol pour des raisons de sécurité. Sans le soutien et les ravitaillements de l'US Air Force, l'armée de l'air française aurait perdu environ 50% de ses sorties quotidiennes. »

□□□□□

A noter que la France a déployé ses avions de combat Rafale au cours des missions de soutien aérien et de reconnaissance contre les insurgés. Des frappes aériennes par les Rafale et Mirages ont été menées autour de Gao et de Tombouctou en particulier sur des dépôts de logistique, des camps d'entraînement ou des colonnes de véhicules. D'autres forces françaises agissant sur le terrain avec deux hélicoptères Puma SA330 assuraient des missions de sauvetage.

Le renseignement et la connaissance sur les intentions de l'ennemi ont joué un rôle primordial comme dans toute campagne militaire. Les États-Unis avait déployé en amont des drones Predator et Reaper depuis une base de Niamey pour surveiller la région du nord Mali. Ces mêmes drones avait été utilisés pour surveiller le mouvement transfrontalier des combattants du Boko Haram, mouvement terroriste islamique du Nigéria proche d'AQMI. La Deux drones français Harfang basés à N'Djamena ont aussi participé aux opérations.

Les avions de surveillance de type "Sentinel R-1" britanniques ont été d'une aide précieuse lors de l'opération Serval. Ils sont équipés d'un radar à synthèse d'ouverture très sophistiqué et d'un système appelé "Ground Moving Target Indicators" permettant d'identifier les positions hostiles. Ces missions de surveillance ont permis de fournir des informations téléchargées et transmises en temps réel de l'avion.

La situation au Mali ressemble aujourd'hui à celle en Afghanistan à moindre échelle. Les pays occidentaux peuvent facilement repousser une agression militaire d'insurgés qui émergent de l'ombre pour s'engager dans une guerre conventionnelle.

S'ils peuvent tenir en échec une insurrection caractérisée par des kamikazes, le contrôle des attaques individuelles en bordure de route à l'aide d'engins explosifs est toutefois beaucoup plus problématique. En fin de compte, tout dépendra de l'attitude de la population locale et du camp qu'elle soutiendra.





Africa's first C-130J, destined for Tunisia, is rolled out of Lockheed Martin's paint shop at Marietta, Georgia, earlier this year.

# Hercules still strong in North Africa...

«Le C-130 toujours en pointe en Afrique du Nord» – Page 42

*From Morocco in the west to Egypt in the east, every one of the five African nations that have a Mediterranean coastline uses the Lockheed Martin C-130. But one of those countries' Hercules are to be found a long way from home. Alan Dron reports.*

**S**itting forlornly on tree-surrounded areas south of Lockheed Martin's huge manufacturing plant at Marietta, Georgia, are 'the abandoned airlifters'.

Parked quietly on two remote areas, away from the bustle of the factory that churns out the West's most numerous military cargo aircraft, are eight C-130H Hercules.

Their two-tone desert camouflage schemes now bleached by more than 40 years' exposure to the hot Georgia sun, the aircraft are in visibly poor shape, with sagging tyres and mould staining their paintwork.

The aircraft were ordered by Libya in 1972, as a follow-on from an initial 1969 batch of C-130s, with the government of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi paying \$70 million for the new examples. But before they could be delivered, relations between Tripoli and Washington soured so badly that the US Government

blocked their delivery. They have been parked at Marietta ever since.

A Lockheed Martin spokeswoman said the company was unable to talk about the aircraft, as it did not own them. She referred questions to the US Air Force, which in turn referred me to the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), which handles the US foreign military sales programme, where equipment is sold by direct government-to-government agreement.

DSCA spokeswoman Vanessa Murray said the eight aircraft are still legally owned by Libya.

They were no longer airworthy and had been classified as "beyond economical repair".

However, the aircraft remain packed full of spare parts that were ordered by Libya as part of the contract. At least some of those could be of use to help maintain its existing C-130s.

"Libya wants to salvage whatever spare parts are still

**The aircraft are in visibly poor shape, with sagging tyres and mould staining their paintwork.**



Morocco has 16 C-130s in service.

usable and scrap the rest,” said Murray. If the aircraft’s airframes are cut up for scrap, “The proceeds would go to Libya.”

This long-running dispute has not persuaded the new Libyan Government against ordering more of the medium cargo aircraft. In June, the DSCA informed Congress that Tripoli wanted to buy two C-130J-30s, together with 10 Rolls-Royce AE 2100D3 engines (eight installed and two spares), plus training and support for an estimated \$588 million.

The Libyan Air Force intends to use the new aircraft primarily to move supplies and personnel within the desert nation, which has limited surface transport infrastructure within its interior.

They will assist with border security, interdiction of terrorists and allow rapid reaction to internal security threats.

Currently the Libyan Air Force is believed to have around nine legacy C-130s on strength, although Flightglobal’s Milicas database records just single examples of the C-130H and the L-

100, the civilian version of the aircraft. Libya’s national airline acquired several L-100s on the second-hand market over the years.

Assuming Libya’s request is approved, the new aircraft will not be the first ‘Js’ to be delivered to North Africa.

The arrival in Tunisia in April of a C-130J-30 constituted a small landmark in the more than five decades of service achieved by the US-built airlifter.

The aircraft was the first ‘J’ to be delivered to Africa. A further example is due to arrive in Tunisia next year. As well as the C-130J, the country’s small air force has several examples on strength of one of the oldest marks, the C-130B, plus two or three later H-models. The Bs came from US surplus stocks in the 1980s.

Algeria has a reported 16 C-130Hs on strength. Of these, nine are C-130H and seven C-130H-30 longer fuselage variants, according to London’s International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), out of an originally-ordered 18, plus two L-100-30s.

The C-130Hs were acquired in unusual circumstances. The US Government approved their sale – allegedly at very favourable prices – in the early 1980s in appreciation of Algeria’s role in helping negotiate the release of personnel from the US embassy in Tehran. More than 100 embassy staff had been held illegally by the Iranians after the revolutionary Islamic government came to power in 1979.

Morocco bought its first examples of the C-130 in 1973 and now has 16 in service. Most are standard C-130H models, but two or three (sources vary as to the exact number) are KC-130H tankers. It also has a single example of the rare RC-130H. This, according to the IISS, is equipped with a side-looking airborne radar. Border surveillance is thought to be its most likely role; Morocco and Algeria accuse each other of harbouring militants and of arms smuggling across their mutual border.

One C-130H was lost when it crashed into a mountain in the south of the country in July 2011,

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killing 78 people on board.

The largest C-130 fleet in North Africa belongs to Egypt. Following its initial 1976 order for six C-130Hs, numbers were built up steadily and now stand at 21 'H' (including three bought from Denmark in 2004), three stretched C-130H-30s and a pair of EC-130H electronic intelligence platforms.

One aircraft was lost in the rescue attempt of a hijacked airliner in Cyprus in 1978, when firing broke out between a task force of Egyptian anti-terrorist commandos brought to the island by the C-130H and the Cypriot National Guard.

According to Steve Pigott, director of C-130J international programs, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics, the five African nations that border the Mediterranean are now expressing interest in the recapitalisation of their fleets. Many of the region's C-130s were purchased in the 1970s and early 1980s and the extreme climatic conditions, plus in many cases operating into austere airstrips, have taken their toll.

"All of these nations have significant C-130 fleets and well-trained, professional air forces that operate them. And now that the C-130J has proven itself around the globe, we expect that many of our legacy customers will continue upgrading their fleets. As such, we expect to sell more Js in north Africa over the next several years."



While not naming names, Pigott confirms that "there are on-going C-130J procurement activities across the region at this time".

Brazilian airframer Embraer is developing its KC-390 twin turboprop military transport to compete for roughly the same market segment occupied by the C-130, but Pigott believes the US aircraft will continue to see off rivals, despite the C-130's design stemming from the late 1950s.

"We don't think in terms of planes directly competing with the C-130 since we don't believe there are any aircraft that can do what a C-130 can," he said, citing its ability to handle tasks ranging from maritime surveillance through search and rescue to aerial refuelling.

"What we usually see instead is competition for resources – does a customer focus on airlift or do they invest in fighters or ships or another weapon system?"

One factor that may prove an obstacle to newcomers such as the KC-390 gaining a foothold in the market is the presence of used C-130s from the US inventory. These can be competitively priced for resale and, although such 'excess defence articles' are sold on a direct government-to-government basis without Lockheed Martin's involvement, the US company is likely to pick up contracts to support the aircraft under their new owners.

The C-130 is likely to be seen in North African skies for many years to come.

## SOMMAIRE

# Le C-130 toujours en pointe en Afrique du Nord

*Les cinq pays africains du littoral méditerranéen opèrent des C-130 de Lockheed Martin. Toutefois 8 C-130 Hercules sont à l'abandon autour du site industriel de Marietta, dans l'état de Georgia depuis 40 ans.*

*Une enquête d'Alan Dron.*

Ces avions ont pourtant été commandés en 1972 par la Libye sous le régime du colonel Mouammar Kadhafi qui avait même effectué une avance de 70 millions de dollars américains. Entre-temps, les relations entre Tripoli et Washington se sont détériorées à tel point que le gouvernement américain a bloqué la livraison de ces avions.

Une porte-parole de Lockheed Martin a déclaré ne pas être habilitée à s'exprimer sur ce sujet car ces huit C-130 appartiennent légalement à la Libye. Vanessa Murray, porte parole de la l'agence de défense et de sécurité de la coopération américaine (DSCA), confirme cette information et indique que ces avions ne sont plus en état de marche. Ces C-130H possèdent toutefois bon nombre de pièces de rechange que la Libye souhaite récupérer, selon les termes du contrat.

Malgré ce différend, la Libye souhaite acquérir deux nouveaux C-130J incluant support et formation pour un montant d'environ 588 millions de dollars. Elle souhaite utiliser ces avions pour le transport de matériel et de personnel dans les périmètres désertiques et pour assurer la sécurité de ses frontières, le pays ne disposant pas d'une infrastructure routière adéquate. La DSCA a d'ailleurs informé le Congrès de la décision de Tripoli.

Le C-130J ne sera pas le premier avion livré en Afrique du Nord si le contrat aboutit. L'armée de l'air tunisienne compte déjà un exemplaire dans sa flotte depuis avril dernier et doit en recevoir un autre en 2014. Une véritable percée pour l'avionneur américain. La Tunisie opère actuellement 2 à 3 C-130H et quelques C-130B. L'Algérie dispose d'une flotte de 16 C-130H dont le C-130H-30 avec un fuselage plus long, selon l'institut international des études stratégiques de Londres (IISS). Ces C-130H ont été acquis au début des années 1980, le gouvernement américain ayant approuvé cette vente en reconnaissance du rôle de

l'Algérie dans les négociations pour la libération du personnel pris en otage à l'ambassade américaine de Téhéran. Le Maroc a acheté ses premiers C-130 en 1973 et dispose de 16 avions actuellement en service. Cette flotte compte aussi 2 à 3 KC-130H et un exemplaire unique du RC-130H. La surveillance des frontières reste un véritable enjeu pour le Maroc et l'Algérie, les 2 pays s'accusant mutuellement d'abriter des militants et de faire de la contrebande d'armes aux frontières. Signalons que l'Egypte

possède la plus grande flotte de C-130 d'Afrique du Nord avec 21 avions.

Selon Steve Pigott, directeur des programmes à l'international du C-130J de Lockheed Martin, ces cinq pays africains bordant la Méditerranée ont manifesté un vif intérêt pour moderniser leurs flottes d'avions de transport. Beaucoup de C-130 ont plus de 30 ans et ont connu des opérations difficiles dans des conditions climatiques extrêmes. Ces pays disposent déjà d'une importante flotte de C-130 et des professionnels des armées de l'air hautement formés.

Lockheed Martin projette de vendre davantage de C-130J en Afrique du Nord au cours des prochaines années, cet avion ayant fait ses preuves ailleurs dans le monde.

L'avionneur brésilien Embraer développe dans le même segment de marché, l'avion de transport militaire KC-390. Steve Pigott est convaincu que l'avion américain va continuer à surpasser ses rivaux, malgré une conception ancienne du C-130.

"Nous ne pensons pas en terme d'avions ou de concurrents car nous ne pensons pas qu'il existe pas un avion capable de faire ce que peut faire un C-130", rappelle Steve Pigott, tout en soulignant la polyvalence des missions du C-130.

La présence de C-130 d'occasion est également un facteur important qui peut s'avérer un obstacle important aux nouveaux entrants sur le marché, selon Steve Pigott. Ils peuvent faire l'objet de revente à des prix compétitifs ou être vendus sur une base directe de gouvernement à gouvernement sans l'intervention Lockheed Martin, la société américaine étant susceptible de capter ces contrats pour apporter un soutien aux avions ainsi qu'aux nouveaux propriétaires.

Le C-130 a sûrement un avenir radieux dans le ciel de l'Afrique du Nord pour les années à venir.







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SAAF Hawks have recently been modernised, giving them the ability to simulate the radar performance of the Gripens, for which they train pilots. PICTURE: BAE SYSTEMS

# South African

**F**or years, the South African Air Force (SAAF) was one of the most professional air arms in Africa. Its aircraft may not always have been the most modern available, but it was highly capable, innovative and proven in combat. It was undoubtedly the most effective in sub-Saharan Africa.

Today, South African defence commentators increasingly despair of its ability to operate effectively. Many of its newest combat aircraft – some delivered just a year ago – are in storage, pilots risk losing their currency on type and its main fighter airbase has no mains electricity.

The country's ability to influence events in the continent is becoming compromised and it has increasing difficulty even in transporting relatively small numbers of troops to take part in peacekeeping missions.

A decade ago, it all seemed very different.

The South African Government had embarked on several major military purchases to

*Most of its front-line fighters in storage; virtually an entire fleet of helicopters mothballed; some of the oldest transport and patrol aircraft on the planet; air bases crumbling.*

**Alan Dron asks: What is happening to the South African Air Force?**

replace elderly equipment and maintain the country's position as the most powerful nation in southern Africa.

Notably, the navy received four modern patrol frigates to protect the sea routes around the Cape of Good Hope. And the air force purchased 26 Saab Gripens (17 single-seat 'Cs' and nine two-seater 'Ds') as its front-line combat aircraft, supported by 24 BAE Systems Hawk Mk120s as lead-in fighter trainers.

These were relatively small numbers, but a match for any potential adversaries, especially given the high standards of technically-trained manpower in South Africa.

The Gripens were delivered from 2008, with the final examples being delivered as recently as 2012. But earlier this year, 12 were placed in long-term storage: "At any given time there might be six to 10 serviceable per day, but I don't think they fly more than six a day," said Erika Gibson, military writer with South Africa's Beeld newspaper. The reason they can't fly more than six? "That's more or less all the pilots they've got."

The unit, 2 Squadron based at AFB Makhado, Limpopo Province, has been allowed just 200 flying hours this year. "The pilots are keeping themselves current by flying a simulator," said Gibson.





**Top left:** SAAF C-130BZs may carry the modern US-style grey colour scheme, but the venerable aircraft are rapidly approaching the end of their operational careers. SAAF.

**Above:** Virtually the entire SAAF fleet of Agusta A109 light helicopters has been grounded.

**Left:** A Saab Gripen D, loaded with iron bombs, on approach to AFB Makhado, Limpopo province.

PHOTOGRAPHER FRANS DELY.  
COPYRIGHT SAAB AB

# Air Farce?

The crisis has been deepened by the fact that the Gripens' maintenance support contract with Saab was allowed to lapse at the end of April. "This is worsening the situation even more because there are no spares or maintenance support." The result? The grounded aircraft are being cannibalised to keep a few flying.

The Hawk fleet at Makhado is in a relatively good state, she said, being simpler to maintain and cheaper to operate than the Gripens.

However, the condition of the Agusta A109 helicopter fleet is even worse than that of the Gripens. South Africa bought 30; Gibson said that only a couple are now flying, and only to keep pilots operational who are about to lose their currency on the type due to lack of flying hours. The unit, she said, has been allocated just 71 flying hours this year: "That gives you just enough to do some ground runs from time to time."

The SAAF, she noted, has discovered that the A109s are "hugely complex aircraft to fly"

compared to the 1960s vintage Sud Alouette IIIs they replaced.

The few flying hours available to South Africa's military helicopter fleet are being used in peacekeeping missions elsewhere in Africa. Three Atlas Oryx (upgraded versions of the Aérospatiale SA330 Puma) are serving in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

These are supposed to be joined by two more Oryx plus two Denel Rooivalk attack helicopters from the SAAF fleet of 11. The SAAF was keen, said Gibson, to use the deployment to demonstrate the Rooivalk's capabilities.

However, she added, the SAAF needs around 150 million Rand (around \$15 million) for the deployment. United Nations procedures stipulate that nations participating in UN peacekeeping missions pay their own costs up front, then claim the money back later. And South Africa cannot find the necessary funds.

As indicated by the last incident, the problem

facing the SAAF is financial. "The warning bells have been ringing for quite a number of years because the defence budget, in real terms, has been cut, cut, cut," said Gibson. "We've been writing, yelling, sounding all the alarms, saying 'You can't do this indefinitely.' You can cut the fat and the muscle, now they have come to the point where you have to amputate.

"I don't know if it's really dawned on the Government what it's doing."

There has been a lack of realisation that expensive equipment requires an operating budget, not just the purchase price. For example, the operational budget for the helicopter force was cut by 60%, yet the expected outputs from the force remained the same.

At the end of 2012, the SAAF cancelled another maintenance and support contract, this time with Denel Aviation, to save money.

The contract has been in place for 30 years, said Gibson, and its withdrawal has been disastrous:

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on Page 46



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“These 550 [Denel] people were your aircraft specialists. They’ve been working on these aircraft for decades.

“Air force technical people had never learned to cope, they would always ask Denel. We now have too few people at squadron level to do the work and even the ones that are there are vastly under-qualified.”

SAAF’s ground infrastructure is also crumbling. AFB Makhondo, where the Gripens and Hawks are located, is miles away from the nearest town and personnel live on base. Its own electricity sub-station broke down last year. It has not yet been repaired.

“That base has been without electricity since October last year. They’re running the base on generators because the department of public works cannot get its act together to get someone to repair the sub-station. Every base has its own operational budget, not only for aircraft but also for [utilities such as] electricity and water. At Makhondo, 90% of the base’s operational budget is going into the diesel for the generators. So there’s nothing to spend on the buildings, which are falling apart.

“At the end of last year and start of 2013 there were huge floods up there. A lot of the base is underground and the operations room, with all its computers, was flooded.

“It’s a very, very sad state of affairs. It’s a decade of under-funding that is now bringing the whole South African National Defence Force to a grinding halt. It has affected the air force most because it runs the most expensive systems.”



Pilots are frustrated by the situation and are starting to leave: “You don’t join the air force to fly a simulator. You’re going to go and fly somewhere else. Quite a lot of our guys have joined the Royal Australian Air Force and Royal Australian Navy.”

According to noted South African defence analyst Helmoed Heitman, the country’s Government “must decide what it wants a defence force to do, then come up with a force design and cost it accordingly.

“Are we going to take part in security operations further afield [in Africa], or just immediately around our borders... or sit with our thumbs in our bums?”

To be able to sustain one or two combat groups in peacekeeping operations, as well as provide defence of national key points against terrorism and restore SAAF capabilities, will require annual defence expenditure of around 2% of GDP; it is currently around 1.1%.

Heitman said he believed the chances of the higher figure being achieved were “slightly better than 50%”.

This is partly because of the findings of an independent defence review ordered by the defence minister and published earlier this year. That review said South Africa had “an inescapable continental leadership role” and



Two Gripen Ds were the first of the 26-strong South African order to be delivered, in 2008.

PHOTOGRAPHER FRANS DELY. PICTURE: SAAB AB

needed the military capabilities to back that up.

However, the imbalance between South Africa’s growing military commitments and under-funded defence budget meant it was “unable to fully fulfil its constitutional responsibility” to defend South Africa. “There must be either a greater budget allocation or a significantly scaled-down level of ambition and commitment, which is aligned to the current budget allocation.

“The SA Air Force remains critically underfunded. Too few pilots are being trained to fly the newly acquired fighter aircraft and combat support helicopters; those that have been trained are not flying the requisite hours for maintaining combat proficiency. Currently there is a critical constraint in intra- and inter-theatre air mobility.”

The review is slowly winding its way through the parliamentary process: “I think the Government is about to get a fright when it’s told what is actually flying,” said Heitman. “I think there will be sufficient public noise and embarrassment for the government to cough up money.”

In the short term, however, the government needs to pump money into the SAAF “very quickly, to keep pilots and technicians”.

But the SAAF also needs to slim down; around 70% of its budget is spent on personnel. “The air force currently has far too many people. Nobody has the nerve to declare people surplus to requirements because we have 30-40% youth unemployment. The fear is that discharged young people will gravitate towards crime.”

And, with a general election due next year, the chance that manpower will be cut in the near term is unlikely.

In July, however, SAAF head Lieutenant General Fabian Msimang was reported by specialist website Defenceweb as admitting the force was “overstocked with senior personnel” and that he was working on a restructuring programme.

Assuming that more money can be found, there are several priorities facing the SAAF, said Heitman.

The Gripens are due to receive the A-Darter infrared missile next year but the type still requires a beyond-visual-range missile.

A replacement is desperately needed for the ‘TurboDaks’, four converted C-47s that, incredibly, were built in 1942-43 and which still undertake maritime patrols.

Only slightly less critical is finding a replacement for the seven elderly Lockheed Martin C-130BZs, which in June marked their 50th year in SAAF service and on which the service depends for long-range transport. A further two C-130Bs were delivered from surplus US stocks in the late 1990s. (Recently, they proved insufficient for moving men and equipment to central Africa for peacekeeping missions and the SAAF had to hire commercial Ilyushin IL-76s.)

The ideal C-130B replacement, said Heitman, would be the Airbus A400M Atlas. Ironically, South Africa had ordered eight A400Ms, but cancelled them in 2009, citing increasing costs.

The problem is that nothing else fits the bill and if South Africa re-orders the type it will now pay considerably more than the originally-budgeted €837 million (\$1.1 billion).



**Pilots are frustrated by the situation and are starting to leave.**

The C-130J, he argued, suffers from payload/range and volume restrictions if transporting heavy equipment to areas such as central Africa. The new Embraer KC-390 would also be marginal on range and has an insufficiently tall cargo compartment. The Ilyushin IL-476 and Boeing C-17 would be too large and heavy for many African airfields and the low-slung turboprops of Japan’s new Kawasaki C-2 would be vulnerable to foreign object damage on rough airstrips. The Antonov An-70 might be suitable – if it ever reaches production.

Whatever the solution, the C-130BZs are rapidly running out of flying hours.

Asked for a response on the problems facing the SAAF, South African Defence head of communications, Sipiwe Dlamini, said the Government was well aware of the financial challenges facing the entire South African National Defence Force, but declined to go further.

“We are not commenting on operational matters but we would still be able to carry out our mandate... of defending our airspace.

“Despite these challenges we are still able to do our function, as required, whenever we have been tasked by our Government.”



Sam J Basch – 2013

# SAAF celebrates double anniversary

**Double anniversary on June 1 2013:  
A flypast of 28 Squadron SAAF  
Hercules C-130BZ to celebrate 50  
years of service and 70 years since  
the squadron's founding.**

©SAM J BASCH 2013

*Just over 50 years ago five Lockheed C-130B Hercules aircraft – the first batch of seven – touched down at the South African Air Force's (SAAF) Waterkloof air base in Pretoria. On June 1 several of those very same aircraft participated in a celebratory flypast at sunset.*

**Nolene Scott reports.**

**T**he Waterkloof flypast marked 28 Squadron's 70th anniversary and 50 years of operating the Hercules. The squadron was founded at the SAAF base depot in Almaza in Cairo, Egypt on June 1 1943.

As three of the venerable transport planes roared overhead, with No 401 on the static display, the flag was lowered and around 700 guests sat down to a glittering function in a parachute-draped hangar. Its backdrop was one of the C-130s that not only found a home at Waterkloof, but also served South Africa and the continent for half-a-century.

Major General Wiseman Mbambo, SAAF GOC said: "The 50 years' service of the SAAF C-130B aircraft has reached significant milestones since acceptance by us on January 18 1963. It includes the oldest operational fleet of the C-130Bs, which has periodically been upgraded to improve its operational readiness."

He was referring to wing refurbishments under the auspices of Lockheed Martin Aeronautics. In the early 1970s the engines were also replaced with better performance Allison T56-A-15 powerplants.

In later years the SAAF received additional C-130Bs and C-130Fs from the US, although some of these were eventually retired.

Referring to the SAAF Hercules fleet's track record of "agile mobility and continental response", Lockheed

Martin's VP and general manager for C130 programmes, George Shultz, said designing new capabilities into a proven airlifter allowed for evolving concepts of operations.

"To meet these more demanding requirements our engineers and designers have worked on the next generation Super Hercules, the C-130J for the coming 50 years."

He argued the 'J' was ideal for missions South Africa has to undertake, currently ranging from peace keeping, maritime surveillance and patrol, search and rescue, airdrop and medical evacuation, to aerial refuelling and humanitarian aid.

South Africa has increasingly been flying such missions in support of African Union (AU) and United Nations (UN) peacekeeping in Africa.

Shultz said air forces around the globe were experiencing the high reliability, improved range, speed and tailored capabilities of the C-130J first hand. Having now flown one million hours, he added, this tactical transport aircraft has been qualified and already field proven itself in every kind of mission in the harshest operating conditions possible.

Lockheed Martin has recently delivered the first 'J' model in Africa to the Algerian Air Force.

Mbambo acknowledged 28 Squadron's role in enhancing South Africa's air power capabilities for regional requirements, noting its recent logistic support in anti-piracy operations, flood relief in Mozambique and deployments in the Central African Republic.

"The inherent multi-role C-130BZ capabilities are indispensable for humanitarian assistance in the region and continent," he said.

This can be attributed largely to the SAAF and Denel, whose partnership provided the necessary MRO, he stated. Denel Aviation is the only Lockheed Martin certified C-130 support centre in Africa.

Squadron commander Colonel Jurgens Prinsloo said the squadron's aim was "to instil in its members respect for the core values of a democratic South Africa", to which it remains committed going into the future.



**A line-up of the first SAAF C-130 Hercules transport aircraft at Dobbins air base at Marietta in Georgia, USA, just before departure for South Africa at the end of 1962. These aircraft landed at AFB Waterkloof on January 16 1963.**

PICTURE: 28 SQN SAAF ARCHIVE COLLECTION



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*File Photo*

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# SkyBird sits comfortably with the jet set

SkyBird's newly refurbished Dornier 328JET airliners will be further modified to include a small number of club-class seats. Inset: Sam Ayodele.

«SkyBird au service des VVIP» – Page 50

*In recent years, the survival rate of new airlines in Nigeria has been low. Now, however, corporate charter carrier SkyBird Air believes it has found a combination of services that will avoid the problems of other start-ups. Alan Dron reports.*

**W**hen SkyBird Air's first flight took to the air on June 25, it marked the end of a long road for Sam Ayodele.

After a career working for other airlines – notably British Caledonian, British Airways and Virgin Atlantic in postings throughout Africa – in 2008 a couple of friends and he decided to set up their own operation.

Creating any airline from scratch is no easy process in any country and Nigeria is no exception.

The obstacles to gaining an air operator's certificate (AOC) have become more difficult recently, with the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) setting higher standards for new airlines wishing to enter the marketplace. Single-aircraft companies have been banned, as have aircraft more than 22 years old.

Ayodele engaged US consultants to help his team navigate the lengthy process and, in April this year, the NCAA granted the company its AOC.

It is an indication of how much stricter the new rules have become that SkyBird was the only one of nine applicants that was successful in its bid.

Managing director Ayodele had been anticipating a successful outcome, however. He was sufficiently confident to already have taken delivery of three Dornier 328JETs from Germany-based completions and refurbishment company 328 Support.

They joined a Gulfstream III and Gulfstream IV already on the company's inventory. At the time of writing, the GIII was undergoing maintenance and the GIV was intended to be used privately.

This means that most of Lagos-based SkyBird's

activities will be focused on the German-built twinjet.

But why choose the 328JET? It is hardly a common type and although spares are readily available, its brief production run (1998-2002, after which Dornier went bankrupt) means that it is not as well-known in the marketplace as, say, an Embraer ERJ135 or even the larger Canadair Regional Jet.

"The aircraft were already in Nigeria," explained Ayodele. "They were being operated by Shell Nigeria, which wanted to dispose of them. And the price was very attractive."

The 328JET, which was developed from the original turboprop version of the design, is relatively slow for a jet (around 400kts) and has a range,

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with maximum payload, of only around 1000nm (1850km). But the design has some significant assets.

It was built to typically high German standards of engineering and corrosion problems are minimal. Its cabin is notably roomy, has space for a good-sized galley and the aircraft has excellent short-field performance, together with large luggage capacity. It's a lot of aeroplane at a relatively low price.

"We wanted to acquire three aircraft of the same type," added Ayodele. "They are modern-generation aircraft, manufactured in 2000, and have a glass cockpit."

SkyBird's director of flight operations, Captain James Daniel, accepted the final aircraft at completions and refurbishment company 328 Support's facility at Oberpfaffenhofen, near Munich, southern Germany in April.

That delivery completed a contract worth more than €14 million (\$19 million) which saw 328 Support refurbish the former Shell aircraft into two 32-seat passenger airliners and a VIP-configured 328DBJ TM.

The 328DBJ TM conversion is a 'first' for Africa. The variant is fitted with long-range tanks, increasing its range, with four passengers, to just under 2000nm (3700km). The cabin was renovated with leather and suede seat covers, wood veneers, a full HD entertainment system, and a SATCOM Wifi system. LED lights were incorporated both internally and externally.

SkyBird Air was originally envisaged as a regional airline. However, after extensive market evaluation, it was determined that a stronger and more profitable market for the aircraft would be in the executive charter sector, with some limited scheduled services in the executive shuttle role.



Director of flight operations Captain James Daniel took delivery of SkyBird Air's third 328JET in Germany in spring 2013.

To make the 328JETs more attractive for this role, some reconfiguration of the 32-seat versions is being undertaken.

"VIPs don't like to have [standard] airliner seats," explained Ayodele. "We want to have club seating in the front of the cabin and use the airline seats for their entourage at the back. The new configuration will have four club-class seats and 20 standard."

Ayodele believes he has found a niche in the market. SkyBird has no serious competitors in this

role, he said, as nobody else has an AOC. Other aircraft used for this role in Nigeria are privately owned and charged out for hire-and-reward.

Looking ahead, he plans to expand from charters into scheduled services in July next year – but scheduled services with a difference. They will be regular VVIP services to Abuja and other regional capitals. He also sees regular VIP and executive shuttle services being provided for some of the many oil companies that operate in Nigeria. SkyBird Air has already won one such contract.



Another sector that SkyBird intends to enter next year is the haj market, flying pilgrims to Saudi Arabia. Nigeria is Africa's most populous country, with an estimated 175 million inhabitants and around 50% are Muslim.

Several Nigerian carriers, notably Kabo Air and Max Air, already operate such services with Boeing 747s and Ayodele accepts that, to compete successfully, SkyBird will need to acquire a larger aircraft. This could be either a Boeing 767 or even a 747, he said.

Ayodele would have undertaken such services this year if his AOC had come through a little earlier, he said, but next year he will definitely be trying to tap into the religious charter market.

A further area of interest is the cargo sector. The west African freight market is attracting increasing attention, with Ethiopian Airlines linking up this year with Togolese carrier ASKY Airlines to set up a cargo hub in the Togolese capital, Lomé. Etihad Cargo introduced a weekly Abu Dhabi-Lagos service late in 2012 and Saudia Cargo launched services to Lagos and N'Djamena earlier this year.

Ayodele believes that an aircraft, such as a Boeing 767 Combi, would suit this market well.

## SOMMAIRE

# SkyBird au service des VVIP

*Le taux de survie des nouvelles compagnies aériennes au Nigéria a été faible au cours des dernières années mais le nouveau transporteur SkyBird Air est convaincu d'avoir trouvé une bonne combinaison de services pour éviter les problèmes rencontrés par d'autres start-ups. Une enquête d'Alan Dron.*

**SkyBird Air a pris son envol le 25 Juin dernier et ce fut l'aboutissement d'un long parcours pour Sam Ayodele. Créer une compagnie aérienne à partir de zéro n'est pas une mince affaire.**

**Il a fallu d'abord franchir des obstacles pour l'obtention d'un certificat de transporteur aérien émis par l'aviation civile nigérienne. Trois Donier 328JET ont ensuite rejoint la flotte de la compagnie qui comptait déjà un Gulfstream III et un Gulfstream IV.**

**SkyBird Air s'est initialement monté comme une compagnie aérienne régionale. Après une analyse de la situation, elle s'est positionnée dans un marché de niche : le transport de personnalités avec un service de navette. Les appareils rachetés de Shell Nigeria ont été transformés pour les rendre plus attractifs pour les clients VIP. Une « première » en Afrique.**

**Sam Ayodele compte exploiter ce marché niche et proposer des services réguliers dès juillet 2014 dont un service VVIP régulier vers Abuja et d'autres capitales de la région et une navette VIP pour certaines compagnies pétrolières opérant au Nigéria.**

**Dès 2014, SkyBird Air projette de capter une part du marché du transport des pèlerins vers l'Arabie Saoudite. A noter que la moitié de la population nigérienne (175 millions d'habitants) est de foi musulmane. Plusieurs transporteurs nigériens dont Kabo Air ou Max Air offrent déjà ce type de services avec des Boeing 747. Il faudra donc investir dans de nouveaux avions selon Sam Ayodele.**

**Le fret suscite aussi l'intérêt de SkyBird Air. Le marché d'Afrique de l'Ouest attire de nombreux acteurs comme Ethiopian Airlines, ASKY ou encore Etihad Cargo.**

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FOR THE JOURNEY

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*Africa's developing healthcare industry is not great news for the growing aerial medevac industry, reports Dan Brightman.*

# Health check for African medevac

«Bilan de santé pour l'évacuation sanitaire en Afrique» – Page 55

**A**frica is an unforgiving continent for those struck down by disease, sickness and trauma-related accidents. Its vast distances between population centres, history of acute lack of investment in medical care facilities, government red tape, and corruption, presents numerous barriers for operators willing to enter the emergency evacuation business.

Following the wave of independence celebrated by almost all African nations during the 70s and 80s, medical services, faced with skills shortages, paucity of facilities and personnel, and lack of government support, have declined until recently.

During the post-World War II period, internal aerial medical-care facilities were limited to voluntary or Christian organisations driven by a core of public donations. Among them were the African Flying Doctor Service, Zambian Flying Doctor Service (ZFDS), and Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF).



Each operated (and continues to operate) community-based healthcare services providing doctor and nursing staff to remote locations.

In the beginning, aircraft were used to bring qualified healthcare professionals to communities to dispense both non-critical and critical care to people unable to afford the long overland distances required to reach well-equipped surgeries and hospitals.

Complicated procedures, or patients needing hospital facilities, were often accommodated by flying people to a central facility, most often found in larger cities.

Early aircraft were flown without any life-support equipment and patients were obliged to use existing seats; or in extreme cases, the seats were removed and the sick or injured placed on the floor.



**The UK's Hangar 8 flies this African-based Learjet 31 through its Johannesburg Stargate subsidiary, which is branded Evacucare throughout the continent.**

Symbolising the development of aerial healthcare services is east Africa's African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), which was started in 1957 by three doctors – Sir Michael Wood, Sir Archibald Monroe, and Tom Rees.

AMREF, like many aviation healthcare operators, used a variety of aircraft during the 50s and 60s.

At first, surplus ex-military types found their way to the continent and these included Avro Ansons and de Havilland Rapides. In many cases regional airlines provided evacuation services, one of them being Central African Airways, which regularly responded to calls by making its de Havilland Beaver aircraft available for emergencies.

ZFDS, founded in 1965, had a history of inconsistent funding but Zambia's health minister, Dr Joseph Kasonde, recently reaffirmed a Government commitment to provide a sustainable future for the organisation. In August

he pledged resources but also insisted that the ZFDS board and management come up with new ways to generate funds.

The organisation, upon which many communities rely on for basic medical care, currently owns a small mixed fleet of two Cessna Caravans and five Britten Norman Islanders. Only two Islanders are maintained in an airworthy condition, the others being used for spare parts. The operation makes use of an HF radio station net installed by MAF, which is employed to communicate the impending visit of doctors and nurses as well as relate details of medical evacuation patients and their symptoms.

Today, the growth of travel insurance companies and corporate businesses exercising their duty of care for staff, has led to the aeromedical evacuation business offering many additional specialist services.

Throughout the 80s and 90s, medical care standards in Africa motivated the entry into service of dedicated aircraft contracted to



**Medair operates a mixed jet fleet that includes this 1990 Hawker 800A. This aircraft will fly from Johannesburg to Lagos non-stop with favourable winds and can carry a pair of Life Port beds and up to three medical personnel. Three flightdeck crew are carried when flight and duty time limits are approached.**

assistance companies and, with the growth of faster, pressurised small jet aircraft, came the development of specialised equipment designed to support patients throughout their flight.

Those hurt in vehicle accidents – the biggest volume of injuries requiring aerial evacuation – found themselves benefitting from evacuation flights that would take them to the closest specialised medical care, often near to their home base. (Behind accident injuries come malaria victims, followed by heart problems).

The widespread use of light jets has placed much of the African continent in easier reach of Europe, as well as nations with a high and improving standard of medical facilities like Kenya and South Africa.

The high cost of care now motivates assist companies to be more judicious in the choice of hospital destination – often at the insistence of their corporate and insurance company clients. South Africa, for example, is one of the world's most expensive medical destinations – up to 40%

higher than other African and some European countries. However, South Africa has joined the USA and Australia in becoming a world leader in medevac regulations and minimum aircraft equipment levels.

At first, assigning nurses and doctors to medical evacuation flights was difficult. Pilots were given map co-ordinates for a remote airstrip in the bush and were expected to find the airfield and, with the help of locals, load patients on board themselves.



A popular story is that of a pilot arriving at an airstrip during the 50s to find a woman in agony with a spear in her chest. The pilot was obliged to break it off each side to enable her to sit or lie down in the cabin of a de Havilland Rapide.

While many countries allow the stowing of patients in unsecured basket stretchers with minimal to no life support equipment and, in

some cases, unpressurised aircraft, South Africa has introduced legislation to equip aeroplanes with a high standard of life support equipment. These include Spectrum Aeromed units, costing more than one million Rand (\$97,000), with specialised electrical and gas connections designed to be plumbed into the aircraft's own systems. The installations have to comply with supplemental type certificates (STC) that meet many nations' own certification standards.

Whereas many African countries don't have any regulations governing medevac aircraft and make use of standard charters with seats removed, nations that insist on a high level of compliance also insist staff are properly qualified.

On a number of occasions, patients have been admitted to hospital to have doctors discover they also carry highly contagious diseases.

Cases of Ebola or haemorrhagic fever carried by road accident or malaria victims are not unknown and, in these cases, both the medevac

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and flight crew are exposed to the dangers of contracting and dying from these exotic diseases.

In many medevac cases in Africa, nursing staff don't know what to expect. In some cases, patients need to be stabilised before transfer to an aircraft, with medical staff satisfied they will adjust to changing altitudes in a pressurised cabin with the least distress. Thus, specialised aircraft will be able to provide intensive care for badly injured evacuees or extremely sick patients.

Equipment includes an oxygen system and ventilator, defibrillator, vital signs monitors, respiratory kits and other items designed to stabilise patients. Moreover, aircraft need to carry stocks of drugs and be able to render a wide variety of care from accident injuries to cardiac problems, as well as paediatric and neonatal care.

The adoption of technology has made navigation an easy task. However, African operational issues are a major reason companies steer clear of the continent.

Among a myriad of organisational issues are basic flight clearances. Africa's airline industry needs bi-lateral agreements to fly into different countries and operators are required to obtain over-flight and landing clearances every time they recover a patient.

Some countries insist on more than a day's notice for clearances and, in these cases, specialised medevac companies will have established a close relationship with their trip providers.

South Africa-based Medair is one example of a specialised operator, which has its own division with the single responsibility of obtaining over-flight and landing clearances for its medevac flights.

With many charter companies seeking a way around the current economic difficulties, Africa has experienced a growth in applications to start evacuation operations. However, charter operators often have little idea of the investment needed to establish a medevac operation.

A basic requirement is not only to

have dedicated aircraft, or at least aircraft already equipped to have a quick-change stretcher/passenger system installed, but to have full-time crews on call 24 hours a day.

One of Africa's largest operators is Johannesburg-based International SOS, which runs a fleet of aircraft in both southern as well as west Africa. The company has a Dassault Falcon 10 and a pair of Learjet 35s in South Africa and a fleet of Lear 45s in Lagos. The west African operation can fly almost 200 hours a month. Repatriation to South Africa is normally facilitated by Johannesburg-based flights and similar cases are flown to Europe from Lagos.

It's generally accepted that accidents and other cases requiring repatriation have a dividing line north of the equator. However, the

**The increasing costs of flights has sent assist companies to other African nations to explore their standards of healthcare.**

increasing costs of flights has sent assist companies to other African nations to explore their standards of healthcare – in many cases matching those in Europe.

New destinations are Dakar in Senegal, with Nairobi becoming

more and more popular. Kenyan medical care is equal to that found in South Africa but is considerably cheaper for insurance companies seeking to get the best deal for their clients.

In many cases, even large corporates, needing to take care of sick staff, will send them to African hospitals rather than return them to the USA or Europe.

The African Medevac business remains static at the moment and, indeed, there is every indication that aircraft operators will see a decline in long-distance flights as hospitals improve the standard of healthcare on the continent – it is estimated that the aviation sector of the industry generates around US\$100 million per annum turnover.

While the world community enjoys seeing Africa becoming more and more developed, it's perhaps not good news for the many specialised companies that operate exclusively to support the insurance, tourism and corporate medical evacuation industry.

## SOMMAIRE

# Bilan de santé pour l'évacuation sanitaire en Afrique

*L'industrie de la santé est en pleine croissance en Afrique. Ce n'est toutefois pas une bonne nouvelle pour les transporteurs opérant dans le secteur des évacuations d'urgence (African Medevac). Un décryptage de Dan Brightman.*

L'Afrique est malheureusement un continent difficile pour les habitants frappés par la maladie ou les accidentés graves en raison des grandes distances, du manque d'investissement et de personnel dans les hôpitaux, des lourdeurs administratives ou de la corruption.

Les soins médicaux africains ont évolué après la vague d'indépendance vécue par la majorité des pays africains dans les années 70 et 80. Cette donne a entraîné la mise en service d'avions dédiés à l'évacuation sanitaire.

La croissance du nombre des assureurs et des grandes sociétés souhaitant protéger leurs personnels ont amené les opérateurs à proposer davantage de services spécialisés.

Le coût élevé des soins motive également

l'ensemble des acteurs à choisir judicieusement les hôpitaux. Même si l'Afrique du Sud est l'une des destinations les plus coûteuses, elle est en passe de devenir un leader dans ce secteur.

Si de nombreux pays accueillent toujours des patients avec des équipements de survie insuffisants d'autres demeurent sans réglementation.

Il est toutefois nécessaire pour les opérateurs de disposer d'équipements adéquats et d'équipes disponibles 24 heures sur 24.

Obtenir les autorisations de

vol est également une grande problématique pour le transport sanitaire.

Les médecins découvrent régulièrement que les patients admis à l'hôpital sont atteints de maladies hautement contagieuses comme l'Ebola. Les équipages sont donc exposés aux dangers de les contracter.

Cependant, la qualité des soins est en nette amélioration et de nouvelles destinations médicales émergent comme Dakar ou Nairobi.

Les grandes entreprises enverront ainsi leurs personnels malades vers des hôpitaux africains plutôt qu'aux Etats-Unis ou en Europe, ce qui engendra une baisse des vols long courrier pour les opérateurs.

La croissance du nombre des assureurs et des grandes sociétés souhaitant protéger leurs personnels ont amené les opérateurs à proposer davantage de services spécialisés.



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*Le concept des « Iles Vanilles » a pour vocation de donner une impulsion au secteur touristique insulaire de l'océan Indien. Le transport aérien entre les îles tient une place prépondérante dans son développement global.*

*Une enquête de*  
**Vincent Chappard.**

# LES ILES VANILLES EN MANQUE DE CONNEXIONS

Le concept des « Iles Vanilles » a été lancé en 2010 pour promouvoir le tourisme dans 6 îles de l'océan Indien, à savoir l'île Maurice, les Comores, l'île de la Réunion, les Seychelles, Mayotte et Madagascar. Il s'agit de faire connaître et d'attribuer une identité commune à l'ensemble de ces îles pour qu'elles aient une meilleure visibilité à l'échelle mondiale. La mise en place de l'identité « Iles Vanilles » s'inspire de la réussite du concept similaire des « Caraïbes » qui attirent de plus en plus de touristes venant des quatre coins du globe.

« Ce concept a pour objectif de développer l'attractivité de l'océan Indien, de faire en sorte d'élever le niveau qualitatif d'intervention des professionnels du tourisme et que la marque « Iles Vanilles » émerge au niveau mondial », a déclaré Pascal Viroleau, directeur exécutif des Iles Vanilles depuis novembre 2012 et également directeur de l'office du tourisme de l'île de la Réunion.

Le secteur du tourisme est le socle d'une majorité des économies d'Afrique et de l'océan Indien. Il est cependant confronté à une concurrence exacerbée et à la mise sur le marché de nouveaux produits. Pour accroître l'attractivité, il est donc nécessaire de partager les différentes cultures et les actions de promotions afin d'avoir un point de vente et une stratégie collective pour les îles de l'océan Indien. L'accessibilité, la qualité, la solidarité et la compétitivité constituent les points forts de ce positionnement. L'identité culturelle de chaque île, l'exotisme, les émotions et le patrimoine de l'océan Indien de même que la diversité d'expériences à partager en sont les déclinaisons.



**Pascal Viroleau : les Iles Vanilles émergent au niveau mondial.**

Lors du lancement du concept en 2010, Nando Bodha, ancien ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs de l'île Maurice avait posé les conditions du succès du concept des îles Vanilles. Il repose sur quatre piliers : l'implication des institutions qui s'articule principalement autour de la question des visas, l'accès aérien, la participation et l'engagement des différents acteurs autour d'une stratégie de marketing.

Le concept a fonctionné sur la base du bénévolat depuis 2010 c'est-à-dire que les comités du tourisme des pays respectifs ont concerté leurs efforts pour mener des actions communes. Selon Pascal Viroleau, la première étape était de démontrer l'efficacité des



PICTURE: SERGE GELABERT

actions menées. Des campagnes de promotion, des voyages de presse ou encore de la prospection vers de nouveaux marchés ont été réalisés autour du concept.

Depuis fin 2012, le concept Iles Vanilles est doté d'une structure juridique sous forme d'une association. Ce statut a alors permis de procéder à des recherches de fonds.

« Nos premiers financements sont attendus à la mi 2013, ce qui nous permettra d'aller plus loin dans notre objectif qui aujourd'hui est de faire de la communication et de la promotion pour la marque. Nous travaillons également à la création d'un label commun qui sera le garant de la qualité des prestations qui seront vendues sous forme de package et de combinés », a expliqué Pascal Viroleau.

L'objectif des Iles Vanilles est donc de dynamiser la création de combinés et ainsi proposer des voyages sur plusieurs îles. C'est non seulement

Continuer à la page 59





## SUMMARY

# Vanilla Islands waiting for a connection

The idea of the Vanilla Islands as a serious competitor to the Caribbean is being held back by a lack of cohesive transport thinking, according to the executive director of the islands' association.

The Vanilla Islands concept was launched in 2010 to promote the tourism of the six major Indian Ocean islands – Mauritius, Madagascar, Réunion, the Seychelles, the Comoros and Mayotte.

The plan was to combine resources to make the islands better known globally and to get a step on the tourism ladder.

"We want to develop an attractive package to the Indian Ocean that appeals to all people, whether students, professionals or tourists," explained Pascal Viroleau, who took over as executive director of the Iles Vanilles last November. "Our vision is to see the exotic 'Vanilla Islands' as a worldwide brand.

"Tourism is the key to the majority of the economies in Africa and the Indian Ocean. But this is highly competitive. To try and make the islands appealing we

need to divide their different cultures, have a point of sale and a collective strategy."

But Viroleau warned that without a change in the way the air transport works between the islands, the concept could fail.

Air links between the islands is the rock on which the combined approach is based. "It is vital to have a wider vision and a direct liaison between the islands to facilitate the development of tourism and the movement of the population," he said. "We must be able to use every airport as a hub towards the other islands of the Indian Ocean in order to develop the strategy. Basically, if there is no aerial transportation, there will be no development."

Viroleau added: "A regional airline company for the whole of the Indian Ocean is an essential link for the development of the combined offers and for the connectivity in the region. We need more cooperation and consolidation like that we saw with KLM and Air France, or code sharing between the carriers."



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une nécessité mais une attente des clients, en particulier des pays émergents qui ont besoin de visiter plusieurs îles en même temps. Au delà de la communication, l'association mène des actions comme la mise en commun d'informations comme la veille, la gestion de crise (par exemple la problématique des requins qui a touché plusieurs îles), d'où la mise en place de moyens et de capacités d'intervention.

Le transport aérien et la liaison entre ces 6 îles (dont 5 font partie de la Commission de l'océan Indien) restent la pierre angulaire de la stratégie Iles Vanilles pour assurer sa réussite et sa pérennité. Il est donc vital d'avoir une vision plus large et une liaison directe entre l'ensemble des îles pour faciliter le développement du tourisme et le mouvement des populations. Les perspectives des Iles Vanilles doivent pouvoir utiliser chaque aéroport comme un hub vers les autres îles de l'océan Indien afin de développer les combinés (pré et post voyage) et assurer des économies d'échelle en matière de promotion.

« Le transport aérien est le support principal du développement. S'il n'y a pas d'aérien, il n'y aura pas de développement », précise Pascal Viroleau. « Une compagnie aérienne régionale de l'océan Indien, qu'elle soit composée d'une coopération des compagnies existantes ou d'une autre entité, est un maillon essentiel pour le développement des offres combinées et pour la connectivité dans l'océan Indien. Il faut tout d'abord faire attention à ne pas casser ce qui existe aujourd'hui. Quoique l'on dise, cela a le mérite d'exister. »



Pascal Viroleau milite pour davantage de coopération des compagnies aériennes de l'océan Indien à l'image de ce qui s'est fait avec Air France/KLM ou d'un partage de codes pour l'ensemble des routes de la région.

Les difficultés auxquelles font face les compagnies aériennes de la COI sont connues et elles font des efforts pour se redresser, selon Pascal Viroleau. Il faut faire en sorte que d'un côté les compagnies aériennes fonctionnent et de l'autre que les consommateurs y trouvent leurs comptes et en particulier au niveau des tarifs et des facilités pour l'obtention des visas. Or, une part trop importante du prix payé du billet par le consommateur va dans le paiement de taxes. Elles représentent un tiers voire jusqu'à la moitié du prix du billet au sein de la COI.

« Si on prend par exemple la route Réunion/Maurice (ndlr : elle représente environ 400 000 passagers par an), le consommateur paye 80 euros de taxes sur un billet qui coûte 159 euros. C'est une situation qui n'est pas tenable, » concède Pascal Viroleau.

La baisse des taxes, des formalités plus simples ainsi qu'une meilleure connectivité aérienne restent donc des éléments déterminants pour tout développement économique ou touristique en Afrique et dans l'océan Indien et tout particulièrement pour la pérennisation de la marque « Iles Vanilles ».



Cérémonie d'ouverture de la conférence du COI.

*La Commission de l'océan Indien (COI) a organisé une conférence internationale inédite sur les stratégies et les enjeux du transport aérien dans l'Indianocéanie, les 2 et 3 mai 2013 dernier, dans la capitale de l'île Maurice. Un compte rendu de Vincent Chappard.*

## Est-il temps pour une compagnie low-cost indiaocéanique?

« Is it time for an Indian Ocean low-cost carrier? » – Page 61

La conférence organisée par la COI a réuni pour la première fois les principaux acteurs du transport aérien de la région afin de débattre de la question stratégique de la connectivité aérienne régionale. La COI regroupe 5 états et territoires insulaires (Union des Comores, France/La Réunion, Ile Maurice, Les Seychelles et Madagascar). Elle compte 25,5 millions d'habitants (dont 10 millions ont moins de 20 ans) et 5,5 millions de km<sup>2</sup> de zones économiques exclusives.

Le transport aérien et la connectivité entre les îles de l'océan Indien est en effet un véritable enjeu de développement économique. Le tourisme est aussi l'un des piliers économiques de la région et cette industrie est largement tributaire de l'aérien.

Jean Claude de l'Estrac, Secrétaire général de la COI interpelle dès son discours d'introduction : « Les quatre compagnies déficitaires pourraient sans doute constituer une compagnie « Air Océan Indien » par exemple, rentable, solide et stratégiquement utile... à toute l'Indianocéanie? »

En effet, Air Austral, Air Madagascar, Air Mauritius et Air Seychelles, rencontrent des difficultés financières. La crise, l'envolée des cours du pétrole, l'éloignement des marchés internationaux, dont ceux d'Europe gagnés par la morosité, l'étroitesse des marchés domestiques, et bien entendu le morcellement de l'offre

aérienne, « handicapent naturellement la compétitivité tant régionale qu'internationale de nos transporteurs », ajouter à cela, les problèmes de taxes et de visas.

La capacité de l'offre aérienne régionale est aujourd'hui morcelée entre les transporteurs nationaux, ce qui handicape leur compétitivité tant régionale qu'internationale. Le transport aérien régional est perçu comme un frein à l'intégration économique et au développement durable de l'Indianocéanie. La compétitivité d'une région est directement reliée à sa connectivité et plus de transport aérien signifie simplement des revenus pour ses habitants et pour l'économie.

« Il n'y a qu'une solution, les pays de l'océan Indien doivent adopter une politique plus libérale sur le transport aérien à savoir une ouverture, même si elle est graduelle, pour pouvoir attirer les compagnies aériennes étrangères afin de mieux desservir les îles de la région », a déclaré Vijay Poonoosamy, président du Comité des Affaires de l'IATA et vice-président des Relations publiques et internationales d'Etihad Airways.

L'ouverture du ciel ne veut pas forcément dire que les compagnies aériennes vont venir, selon Vijay Poonoosamy. Il y a beaucoup de compagnies qui ont des droits et ne viennent pas car elles ne trouvent pas la fiabilité d'une opération. Mais pour attirer les autres, il faut

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# LES ILES VANILLES

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ouvrir l'espace aérien et leur donner la possibilité d'évaluer le marché et la chance de venir. Si l'on décide de fermer son ciel, il n'y a pas cette possibilité d'opérer du fret et de transporter des passagers.

Vijay Poonoosamy comprend que ces pays veuillent que leurs compagnies nationales demeurent opérationnelles mais pour cela, il faut qu'elles deviennent viables et fassent le travail nécessaire comme l'ensemble des compagnies du monde. Elles doivent se remettre en cause en termes de stratégies, d'opérations, de coûts. Aucune compagnie au monde ne peut survivre si elle n'est pas compétitive sachant que le marché devient de plus en plus compétitif. Ce n'est pas souligne-t-il, la protection d'un état qui la rendra compétitive, elle le pourra pendant quelques temps mais pas à long terme.

Des études réalisées par InterVistas ont montré par exemple que l'accès au ciel de l'île Maurice était trop restrictif avec des limites de capacité, de prix et du nombre de compagnies aériennes. Si Maurice libère davantage son accès aérien, elle pourrait augmenter son trafic international d'1,6 millions de passagers, réduire de moitié ses taxes sur l'aérien, créer 17 500 emplois et augmenter son produit intérieur brut de 20 à 50 millions d'euros, tout en satisfaisant les groupes hôteliers à la recherche de 400 000 touristes en plus par an.

« Il importe à nos pays de savoir positionner, non plus une offre touristique éclatée, mais une



PICTURE: BEACHCOMBER HOTELS

offre combinée. C'est tout l'enjeu de la stratégie des Iles Vanilles », rappelle Pascal Violeau, directeur exécutif du concept des Iles Vanilles.

Au delà de ce que les compagnies aériennes peuvent faire pour assainir leurs coûts d'opérations, améliorer leur compétitivité et être profitable, il y a aussi une nécessité de trouver davantage de synergie. Les gouvernements doivent agir et ouvrir immédiatement l'espace aérien à l'ensemble des îles de l'océan Indien avec un régime

de ciel ouvert ce qui facilitera la connectivité dans le respect même des coopérations et des accords bilatéraux entre les pays.

Paul Moore, consultant chez Constellation Aviation Consulting, a mené une étude sur la connectivité dans l'océan Indien. En comparant 6 routes de la région à des celles en Europe (avec des distances similaires) opérées par une compagnie à bas coûts comme EasyJet, il constate que les prix de l'ensemble des compagnies aériennes de l'océan Indien sont plus élevées de 425% par rapport aux prix opérés en Europe, certaines sont 6 fois plus chères. Les prix pratiqués dans l'océan Indien sont également 2 à 3 fois plus onéreux que ceux pratiqués dans la région des Caraïbes. Les taxes payées par un passager sur son billet d'avion représente environ un tiers du prix du billet voir même la moitié sur certaines routes, comme celle entre l'île Maurice et La Réunion qui concentre, selon nos informations, 400 000 passagers par an, soit plus de 70% du trafic des îles de l'océan Indien. Plusieurs îles imposent également des taxes additionnelles (départs, visas, extension du terminal, etc..) qui s'ajoutent aux coûts du billet.

## Encore et toujours des taxes

Alors que le niveau des taxes sur le transport aérien reste très élevé dans beaucoup de pays en Afrique, les îles de l'océan Indien ne dérogent pas malheureusement à la règle. Le passager paye effectivement bon nombre de taxes sur son billet d'avion : taxe d'aéroports, redevance passager, taxe de l'aviation civile, surcharge de la compagnie aérienne voire des contributions additionnelles dans certains pays comme des taxes d'embarquement, la taxe de solidarité (taxe Chirac), de visas ou d'extension de terminal.

Paul Moore, consultant chez Constellation Aviation Consulting, a dévoilé une étude à la conférence sur la connectivité aérienne dans l'océan Indien en mai dernier. Le constat est édifiant : le prix de l'ensemble des compagnies aériennes de l'océan Indien est de 425% plus élevé, certaines routes sont même 6 fois plus chères par rapport aux prix d'un opérateur à bas coût en Europe.

Selon la commission de l'océan Indien (COI), les compagnies aériennes de la région notamment Air Austral, Air Mauritius ou Air Madagascar sont toujours dans une situation délicate malgré quelques embellies et la sérénité sur le long terme n'est aucunement assurée. Elles ont pu compter jusqu'à présent sur des injections de capitaux publics et privés.

« Nous ne pouvons pas continuer à nier qu'une des raisons des difficultés financières de nos compagnies aériennes tient au fait que l'offre régionale est morcelée », rappelle Jean Claude de l'Estrac, secrétaire général de la COI. « Les taxes et redevances qui comptent entre 35% à 51% du prix d'un billet d'avion, qu'il soit intra-régional ou intercontinental, est de surcroît un réel problème. Si cette taxation est une source de revenus légitimes pour nos Etats, leur poids dans la structure d'un billet d'avion est préjudiciable pour nos économies et nos destinations. »

Le secrétaire général de l'Organisation mondiale du tourisme, Taleb Rifai, s'est également inquiété des niveaux de taxes lors de la conférence mondiale du transport aérien de Montréal, le 18 mars dernier. Il parle d'un « préjudice net pour l'économie », d'une « distorsion du marché », d'un « obstacle au commerce. »

La compétitivité d'un pays ou d'une région est ainsi directement liée à sa connectivité aérienne.

« Les gouvernements des pays de l'océan Indien doivent prendre des initiatives pour ouvrir l'espace aérien au niveau international et pour appliquer un régime de ciel ouvert au sein des îles de la région. Le problème des visas et des taxes doit être également abordé afin que les voyages se fassent de manière optimale », souligne Vijay Poonoosamy, président du comité des affaires de l'industrie de l'IATA et vice-président des affaires internationales et publiques d'Etihad Airways.



Paul Moore.



Par ailleurs, le système de taxes et des visas doit être revu pour que les voyages entre ces îles se fassent de manière optimale. Etablir une compagnie à bas coûts dans l'océan Indien est souhaitable lorsque l'on constate en Afrique, le développement de FastJet.

Les compagnies aériennes de l'océan Indien ne sont pas hostiles aux partenariats. Il en existe beaucoup. Air Austral prévoit un retour à l'équilibre pour 2014 avant de nouer davantage de coopérations. Air Seychelles poursuit son développement mais il se fera avec son partenaire stratégique Etihad Airways. La priorité d'Air Mauritius est « de survivre » et la compagnie ne semble pas prête « pour le moment à la





## SUMMARY

## Is it time for an Indian Ocean low-cost carrier?

*Regional air transport was put under the microscope when the Indian Ocean Commission hosted an unprecedented international conference looking at current challenges and strategies. Vincent Chappard reports.*

Should the four major airlines operating in the Indian Ocean – Air Austral, Air Madagascar, Air Mauritius and Air Seychelles – be merged into one company serving the region? That was one of the suggestions put forward as the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) hosted the first international regional air transport conference in Port Louis, Mauritius.

The IOC is an intergovernmental organisation comprised of five Indian Ocean countries – the Union of the Comoros, France/Réunion Island, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles. It is the only organisation in the region composed exclusively of islands and aims to defend their mutual interest at a regional and international level, while promoting solidarity and sustainable development.

Overall, the five countries and territories have 25.5 million inhabitants (of which 10 million are under 20) and boast 5.5 million square kilometres of exclusive economic zones.

Air transport and connectivity between the islands is a real issue of economic development. Tourism is also one of the economic pillars of the region and that industry is largely dependent on the air.

The creation of an 'Air Indian Ocean' was mooted by IOC secretary general Jean Claude de l'Estrac in his conference opening remarks. "The four unprofitable airlines could undoubtedly constitute an Air Indian Ocean, for example, which could be cost-effective, robust and strategically useful to the whole region," he said.

Air Austral, Air Madagascar, Air Mauritius and Air Seychelles are all facing financial difficulties, added de l'Estrac. The world economic crisis, soaring oil prices, the remoteness from international markets, the narrowness of domestic markets and the fragmentation of the air supply all handicapped both regional and international competitiveness of local carriers, along with the problems of taxes and visas.

Vijay Poonoosamy, chairman of IATA's industry affairs committee and vice-president of international and public affairs at Etihad Airways, believed that the opening up of the skies in the region was vital.

"The countries of the Indian Ocean must adopt a more liberal policy on air transport that is an opening up, even if it is gradual, in order to attract foreign airlines to better serve the islands of the region," he said, adding that there were many companies that had rights in the region but did not exercise them because they could not find the necessary reliability of operation.

"To attract others, open the airspace and give them the opportunity to assess the market and the chance to come here," he urged. "If it is decided to close the sky, there is not the possibility to operate freight and passenger transport."

Poonoosamy said he understood that countries

wanted their national carriers to remain operational but pointed out that they needed to become viable, as required by all companies throughout the world.

"They must challenge in terms of strategies and operational costs," he said. "No company in the world can survive if it is not competitive, given that the market is becoming increasingly competitive."

State protectionism might work for a while, he said, but it couldn't continue in the long term.

Studies by the InterVISTAS Consulting Group – a leading management consulting company with extensive expertise in aviation, transportation and tourism – showed, for example, that access to Mauritius was too restrictive. It was estimated that if Mauritius released more of its air access, it could increase its international traffic, halve air taxes, create 17,500 jobs, increase gross domestic product by between \$26 million and \$66 million and also satisfy hotel groups

looking for 400,000 more tourist places per year.

Pascal Viroleau, executive director of the Vanilla Islands concept – an affiliation of the Seychelles, Madagascar, Réunion Island, Mauritius, the Comoros and Mayotte – to form a united travel destination brand – said: "It is important to know how to position ourselves as a combined offer. This is the challenge of the Vanilla Island strategy."

He believed airlines needed to improve their operating costs, increase their competitiveness and become profitable. There was also a need for greater synergy. Governments needed to act immediately and open airspace to all the islands of the Indian Ocean with a regime that would facilitate open connectivity.

Constellation Aviation Consulting's Paul Moore reported that he had conducted a study on connectivity in the Indian Ocean. Comparing six routes in the area to those in Europe (with similar distances) operated by low-cost airline EasyJet, he found that prices of all airlines in the region were 425% higher than the prices in Europe, with some six times more expensive. Prices in the Indian Ocean were also two to three times more expensive than those in the Caribbean.

He also reported that passenger taxes amounted to about a third of the ticket price or even half on some routes, such as between Mauritius and Réunion, which accounted for 400,000 passengers per year – more than 70% of the island traffic in the Indian Ocean.

Several islands also imposed additional taxes – departures, visas, extension of the terminal, etc – in addition to the cost of the ticket.

The conference heard that the system of taxes and visas needed to be reviewed. It was also pointed out that, after seeing the development of FastJet in Africa, it would be desirable to establish a low-cost airline in the Indian Ocean.

"The four unprofitable airlines could undoubtedly constitute an Air Indian Ocean... which could be cost-effective, robust and strategically useful to the whole region."

régionalisation. » Air Madagascar tente quant à elle de survivre via des coopérations et surtout de sortir de la liste noire de l'Union Européenne.

La Banque Mondiale pousse également au développement rapide du transport aérien dans l'océan Indien car il est limité, pas compétitif et la région souffre d'un manque de visibilité au niveau mondial.

« L'heure est venue d'agir, il faudra créer un million d'emplois par mois pendant 10 ans en Afrique et dans le sud de l'Asie pour accompagner l'évolution démographique de ces régions », a déclaré Hannah R. Messerli, spécialiste du développement du tourisme à la Banque Mondiale.

Selon les chiffres de l'organisation mondiale du tourisme, le secteur a enregistré une hausse de 4% en 2012 (5% en Afrique) et prévoit une croissance de 4% pour 2013, or les arrivées touristiques stagnent dans l'océan Indien. L'Afrique du Sud a enregistré une hausse de 9% et a vu ses recettes du tourisme augmenter de 15%.

« Nous avons pris déjà 20 ans de retard dans le développement de la connectivité aérienne, » a déclaré Georges Chung, président de la société offshore Kross Border et initiateur dans les années 90, d'un projet de compagnie aérienne de l'océan Indien. Il n'a jamais reçu les droits de trafic.

Le développement est aux portes de l'océan Indien. Bon nombre d'avions (Singapore Airlines ou encore Quantas) passent au dessus de la région sans s'y arrêter. Il y a des moyens pour capter cette ressource qui transite entre le Moyen-Orient, l'Asie et l'Afrique.

La démonstration a été faite lors de cette conférence : une politique aérienne cohérente, régionale et ouverte contribue au développement économique et touristique pour créer des emplois, générer et redistribuer des richesses. Reste à savoir si les décisions politiques suivront et si la connectivité aérienne prendra ou non encore 20 ans de retard.



*Jean Claude de l'Estrac, secrétaire général de la Commission de l'océan Indien (COI), revient sur les enjeux du transport aérien dans la région et nous donne sa vision pour y développer une meilleure connectivité.*

# Le moment est venu de se connecter avec le monde

## **Q** Vincent Chappard : Pourquoi cette conférence sur le transport aérien ?

Jean Claude de l'Estrac: Tout part d'un constat : la connectivité régionale est insuffisante. Elle est chère, elle n'est pas en cohérence avec la politique déclarée de nos états qui est de favoriser les destinations touristiques de l'océan Indien comme une destination globale, notamment par le projet des Iles Vanilles.

La région reste globalement aussi insuffisamment connectée avec le reste du monde, par rapport aux objectifs de nos états, en matière de développement économique et touristique.

Il y a 500 millions de touristes qui voyagent par avion dans le monde et la région n'attire qu'un peu plus de 2 millions d'entre eux, soit 0,004%. Nous sommes à environ 10 000 kilomètres des marchés émetteurs, les tarifs sont excessivement chers, et ce n'est pas ainsi que nous allons attirer un plus grand nombre de touristes.

Le tourisme est créateur d'emplois et de richesses pour nos pays, et nous pouvons faire infiniment mieux.

## **Q** VC : Quelle est votre analyse sur le transport aérien dans l'océan Indien ?

JCdL : L'ensemble des compagnies aériennes de la région sont en difficulté pour des raisons connues : elles sont modestes, le marché est morcelé, elles ne sont pas en mesure d'assurer un large nombre de destinations.

Elles ne peuvent pas tenir la compétition face aux grands transporteurs internationaux. Nous pensons donc que le modèle qu'a pu servir nos pays jusqu'ici s'épuise et qu'il faut changer de paradigme. C'est le rôle de la COI de faciliter et de réunir les acteurs, les états, les organismes et les experts pour avancer.

## **Q** VC : Quel est votre premier constat ?

JCdL : Le constat est unanime, le « statu quo » n'est pas une option. Nous ne savons pas encore vers quoi tout cela va aboutir mais plusieurs scénarii seront présentés.

## **Q** VC : Vous parlez de la création d'une compagnie « Air océan Indien » ? Quelles sont les différentes options pour sa mise en place ?

JCdL : Il y a une évidence, si nos compagnies veulent se développer, elles auront de plus en plus de difficulté car nous avons un marché restreint et il est morcelé. Même si elles peuvent faire état conjoncturellement d'une petite embellie, cela ne peut pas tenir la route sur le long terme.

Une fusion aurait le plus de sens économiquement et commercialement mais c'est la plus difficile pour des raisons d'état, l'attachement des pays à colorier les avions aux couleurs nationales n'a pas de sens économique et commercial. Il y a cependant la possibilité d'organiser un partenariat plus approfondi, en mutualisant les ressources, établir une stratégie commune. Une alliance entre les 4 compagnies est l'option la plus réaliste avec la possibilité d'avoir un seul et unique partenaire stratégique pour peser collectivement sur ce partenariat. Elles pourraient également investir dans une compagnie régionale à bas coûts pour assurer la desserte régionale.

## **Q** VC : Peut-on prévoir une ouverture du ciel, même graduelle ?

JCdL : On peut envisager dans un premier temps une ouverture du ciel aérien intra-régionale. C'est d'ailleurs immédiatement faisable. Il y a des pays et des régions qui connaissent de belles progressions comme Les Seychelles ou encore

l'Afrique australe et l'Afrique orientale. Affirmer que nous sommes en saturation, c'est faux. Le tourisme mondial enregistrera une croissance de 3 à 4 % pour les prochaines années.

## **Q** VC : Comment capitaliser sur les réflexions et les propositions émises lors de cette conférence ?

JCdL : Un économiste est en train de finaliser 2 rapports sur la conférence. Il y aura un argumentaire développé pour les compagnies régionales et un autre pour les états.

La prochaine étape est d'amener les états à prendre la mesure de la situation et à comprendre l'enjeu qui se situe au delà de la défense de la compagnie aérienne nationale. Il y a malheureusement une confusion dans la plupart de nos pays.

Ils sont à la fois actionnaires, régulateurs et acteurs au niveau du marché. Nous voyons bien que nous sommes arrivés à la croisée des chemins et que la survie des compagnies est en contradiction avec la politique globale et générale des pays de l'océan Indien.

## **Q** VC : Quelle est la feuille de route de la COI par rapport à la connectivité aérienne dans la région ?

JCdL : Les 2 rapports de la conférence seront remis à la COI au mois de juin 2013. Il sera présenté à nos états lors d'une réunion formelle en août, à Moron, pour une validation politique. Il faut ensuite que les états s'approprient les recommandations. Le rapport sera présenté au conseil des ministres de la COI qui est l'instance décisionnelle, puis donnera une orientation politique et la validation d'un scénario. Cependant, les événements sont en train de faire réfléchir nos états, faute de quoi, ce sont les événements qui décideront pour nous.



## SUMMARY

## The time is right to connect with the world

*Jean Claude de l'Estrac, general secretary of the Indian Ocean Commission, talks to Vincent Chappard about air transport issues in the region and presents his vision to develop better connectivity.*

The status quo is not an option – that's the view of Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) general secretary Jean Claude de l'Estrac following May's international conference on strategies and challenges for air transport in the region.

The conference was vital, according to de l'Estrac, because regional connectivity is expensive and not consistent with the declared policy of promoting tourism in the Indian Ocean as a global destination.

"The region is generally poorly connected with the rest of the world," he said. "There are 500 million tourists around the globe who travel by air and the region attracts only a little more than two million of them, or 0.004%. Tourism creates jobs and wealth for our country and we can do much better.

"All airlines are struggling – they are small, the market is fragmented, they are not able to provide a large number of destinations. They cannot stand the competition against the major international carriers. It is the role of the IOC to facilitate and bring together stakeholders, states, organisations and experts to advance the model that could serve our country.

"The conclusion is obvious; the status quo is not an option. We do not know yet what's going to happen but several scenarios are possible."



One possible option would be the creation of an Air Indian Ocean company. "There is some evidence that, if our companies want to grow, they will find it difficult because we have a small market and it is fragmented," explained de l'Estrac. "Even if they can demonstrate a small improvement, it cannot be sustained in the long term. A merger would make sense economically and commercially."

However, as he pointed out, mergers may not always be politically acceptable, with islands still committed to branding aircraft in their national colours. "It does not make economic and business sense," he noted.

He did believe, however, that there were possibilities of a deeper partnership, pooling resources and establishing a common strategy.

"An alliance between the four companies is the most realistic option with the possibility of having a single strategic partner to collectively shape the partnership. They could also invest in a regional low-cost airline to provide regional service," he suggested.

An open skies policy was also immediately feasible and should be considered.

"There are countries and regions that are experiencing good growth. Look at the Seychelles or southern and east Africa," he said. "To say that we are at saturation point is false – world tourism will grow by 3 to 4% for the next year."

An economist is finalising two reports on reflections and proposals made at the conference. "There will be a developed argument for regional companies and one for the islands," said de l'Estrac. "The next step is to get them to take stock of the situation and understand the challenge that lies beyond the defence of the national airline. There is an unfortunate confusion in most of our countries. They are not only shareholders but also regulators and players in the market. We have arrived at a crossroads and the survival of companies is inconsistent with the overall policy of the country and the Indian Ocean."

The two reports from the May conference were due to be submitted to the IOC as African Aerospace was going to press.

**"Le tourisme est créateur d'emplois et de richesses pour nos pays, et nous pouvons faire infiniment mieux."**

**JEAN CLAUDE DE L'ESTRAC**



*Le transport aérien est, à Madagascar, une industrie ancienne qui remonte à 1960 avec la création de la société MADAIR. C'est un secteur essentiel dans un pays secoué par une instabilité sociopolitique et aux infrastructures encore aujourd'hui insuffisamment développées. Vincent Chappard a rencontré à Antananarivo, Jean Robert Razafy, directeur de l'aviation civile de Madagascar pour faire un état des lieux du développement du transport aérien dans la Grande île.*



## MADAGASCAR DOIT FAIRE FACE À LA NECESSITÉ D'INVESTIR

«Madagascar faces up to the need for investment» – Page 66

**O**n dénombre à Madagascar pas moins de 56 aéroports, un transporteur national et 13 compagnies aériennes privées. Douze de ces aéroports sont gérés par l'ADEMA (Aéroports de Madagascar) et les 44 autres par l'Aviation Civile de Madagascar (ACM). L'Etat souhaite se dégager progressivement de l'exploitation des aéroports pour mieux être dans son rôle c'est-à-dire superviser le suivi de la réglementation.

En 1990, le gouvernement malgache a décidé de promouvoir le développement économique du pays, notamment par le biais du tourisme et de l'exportation. Il s'est ainsi doté d'une politique visant à libéraliser le secteur du transport aérien et offrir des services de transport efficaces et compétitifs.

Selon le rapport préliminaire du plan national de transport (2004-2020) du ministère des Transports malgache, la situation des aéroports malgaches reste préoccupante qu'ils soient gérés par l'ADEMA ou par l'ACM. Leurs équipements techniques et, parfois, même leurs caractéristiques sont insuffisants, voire carrément absents ou inexploitable. La question de la sûreté est aussi d'une importance majeure pour l'avenir et le développement du transport aérien à Madagascar et pour la promotion de l'industrie touristique. La situation générale du réseau aéroportuaire intérieur reste dégradée. Le niveau général de la formation des professionnels reste toutefois bon.

« Nos infrastructures aéroportuaires et en particulier nos 7 aéroports internationaux sont conformes à la réglementation internationale de



**«Il faut cependant se préparer pour l'avenir car nous n'avons pas eu l'occasion de planifier les développements aéroportuaires dans notre pays.»**

JEAN ROBERT RAZAFY

l'OACI et adéquates pour fonctionner avec le type de trafic que Madagascar possède actuellement. Il faut cependant se préparer pour l'avenir car nous n'avons pas eu l'occasion de planifier les développements aéroportuaires dans notre pays », rappelle Jean Robert Razafy.

Selon lui les aéroports internationaux sont aptes à l'exploitation mais pour des raisons commerciales et d'autres encore, les compagnies ne les fréquentent pas.

« Il y a certes des infrastructures qui sont entretenues de manière inégale parmi nos 56 aéroports. Ceux qui sont ouverts aux opérations publiques, l'ACM les contrôle, les surveille et sont en conformité aux spécifications de sécurité », souligne Jean Robert Razafy.

Madagascar a exposé sa vision et ses attentes en mai dernier lors la conférence sur la connectivité aérienne de l'océan Indien. Face aux opportunités, aux défis et à la globalisation du transport aérien, le pays souhaite avant tout renforcer le cadre réglementaire, la sûreté et la sécurité de l'exploitation et ses capacités. Madagascar cherche également à consolider ses coopérations existantes et rechercher de nouveaux partenariats de développement dans un esprit gagnant-gagnant.

L'aviation civile malgache met son énergie pour bâtir un meilleur système de sûreté avec des équipements les plus modernes.

« Nous sommes en train d'installer un système de sûreté dans 8 de nos principaux aéroports. Nous mettons

Continuer à la page 66



A gauche:  
Mont Passot (Nosy Be)  
En dessous:  
Lémurien de Madagascar  
A droite:  
Plage de Madagascar



PICTURES: OFFICE NATIONAL DU TOURISME DE MADAGASCAR

## Madagascar, la grande île rouge de l'Afrique

Madagascar est un pays d'Afrique australe situé dans l'océan Indien, à 400 km à l'est des côtes africaines séparé par le canal du Mozambique.

Le peuplement de Madagascar est issu d'un métissage entre des populations d'origine indonésienne et bantoue qui ont connu ensuite de multiples influences, principalement arabes et européennes.

La population est composée de 18 ethnies faisant de l'île un véritable puzzle humain. Chaque communauté possède ses propres chants, rythmes et danses, ses spécialités culinaires et son artisanat.

L'économie de Madagascar repose essentiellement sur l'agriculture (canne à sucre, coton, sisal, ylang-ylang, cacao, palmier à huile, café, tabac, vanille, girofle, poivre, pois du Cap), les mines et l'extraction de pierres précieuses et bien sûr le tourisme.

Il représente une source de devises considérable pour Madagascar et, devient donc, un des secteurs clés du développement économique du pays.

Environ 255 000 touristes ont visité l'île au cours de l'année 2012 soit une hausse de 10% par rapport à 2011.

Les Français représentaient 53% des visiteurs en 2012 suivis des Réunionnais qui totalisaient 13% des voyageurs.

Madagascar bénéficie d'un environnement naturel de toute beauté et d'une biodiversité impressionnante comme la nouvelle espèce de lézard fouisseur, nommé « Moby Dick ».

La Grande île possède l'un des écosystèmes les plus riches au monde et est en mesure d'exercer une forte attraction sur le marché mondial des produits de séjours, de loisirs et de l'écotourisme.

On peut y pratiquer de la plongée sous marine à Nosy Be, la pêche, la voile ou le surf et le windsurf sur l'un des plus beaux spots situé à Mahajanga. Les touristes peuvent s'adonner également à la randonnée, le rafting, le canyoning, l'escalade, le parapente ou la spéléologie.



SUIITE DE LA PAGE 64

en place des moyens physiques et des équipements de haute technologie comme des systèmes de détection, des scanners, des portes automatiques, des portes sécurisées, des clôtures ou des caméras », affirme Jean Robert Razafy.

900 caméras seront mises en service sur les 8 aéroports avec l'aménagement des postes de travail. Les autorités malgaches travaillent avec une société de vidéo surveillance et assureront le recrutement, la formation et le déploiement des méthodes de travail pour environ 450 personnes. Les aéroports internationaux d'Ivato (près de la capitale Antananarivo) et de Nosy Be seront équipés d'ici fin 2013. Les 8 aéroports le seront fin 2014. Les pistes et les bretelles de l'aéroport de Nosy Be ont récemment été refaites pour accueillir l'Airbus A340 et le Boeing 777 mais semblent peu utilisées. L'ACM travaille également sur la création du premier centre cynophile technique, une première dans l'océan Indien voire en Afrique à l'exception de l'Afrique du Sud où un tel équipement existe déjà.

La sécurité et la sûreté ont cependant un coût. L'aviation civile malgache a mis en place une redevance de sûreté aéronautique. Elle coûte environ 15 dollars par passager et 10 centimes d'euros le kilo pour le fret au départ de Madagascar.

« Nous prélevons un coût très bas par rapport à ce qui se fait ailleurs. Nous ne créons pas de nouvelles taxes (comme la taxe Chirac) mais une redevance. L'ACM fournit un service qui a un coût destiné à ceux qui en bénéficient uniquement », se défend Jean Robert Razafy.

Madagascar souhaite ainsi se construire une image stricte en terme de sûreté. Il en va de même pour les infrastructures dans les ports maritimes du pays.

« L'ACM est le garant de la sûreté des vols. Les aéroports sont contrôlés à Madagascar et nous le faisons savoir au monde entier », rappelle Jean Robert Razafy. « Ceci est bénéfique pour l'image du pays. »

Madagascar a signé la Décision relative à la mise en œuvre de la Déclaration de Yamoussoukro concernant la libéralisation de l'accès au marché du transport aérien en Afrique. Cependant, malgré cette politique de libéralisation, seule la compagnie nationale opère des vols réguliers régionaux et internationaux à l'heure actuelle. Madagascar

souhaite une croissance durable et pour cela toute approche communautaire visant à développer le transport aérien au niveau des pays membres de la COI ne pourrait être que profitable car la Grande île possède beaucoup de potentialités, mais dispose de peu de ressources dont financières pour les exploiter.

Le pays dispose également de 37 accords aériens bilatéraux signés et seulement 13 accords aériens bilatéraux sont exploités dont 5 en partage de codes. Pour qu'il y ait une liaison aérienne entre 2 pays, il faut avant tout qu'il existe des accords bilatéraux entre les états incluant des liaisons aériennes et un certain nombre de conditions en terme de réciprocité.

« Nous avons beaucoup de demandes de trafic de compagnies d'Afrique, d'Asie ou du Moyen-Orient ainsi que des requêtes du Qatar, de l'Inde et du Sri Lanka dernièrement. Nous avons beaucoup d'accords bilatéraux qui ne sont pas exploités en Afrique comme celui avec la Namibie », ajoute Jean Robert Razafy.

Des réflexions sont en cours pour accepter ces demandes sachant que la principale préoccupation dans ce domaine reste la stabilité politique et sociale du pays. Dans ce contexte, Jean

Claude de l'Estrac, secrétaire général de la Commission de l'océan Indien, a dans une déclaration datant du 19 août dernier, salué la récente décision de la Cour Electorale Spéciale de Madagascar : « La Commission de l'océan Indien se félicite de la décision de la Cour Electorale Spéciale de Madagascar qui ouvre la voie à l'organisation prochaine d'élections présidentielles et législatives après de longues années de crise politique. »

« Notre politique est d'amener un maximum de passagers dans le pays. Madagascar veut être en liaison, au centre des échanges commerciaux et c'est sur l'infrastructure que nous devons progresser », précise Jean Robert Razafy.

Selon lui Madagascar fait des grands pas en peu de temps dans le domaine du transport aérien. Il est nécessaire toutefois que l'aéroport d'Ivato se mette à la hauteur du trafic aérien en terme d'aérogare, de postes de contrôle, de la piste, de la mise en place de passerelles pour entrer ou sortir des avions et de la construction d'extensions (fret et passager) durant les 3 ans à venir. « Il n'est pas concevable que des personnes marchent sur la piste de l'aéroport pour embarquer ou se rendre à l'aérogare. L'ACM et l'ADEMA y travaillent et prendront des dispositions adéquates. »

Il reste tout de même une véritable course de fond pour ces organismes afin de moderniser les infrastructures aéroportuaires de Madagascar et redonner à la Grande île son aura d'antan tout en se tournant résolument vers un meilleur avenir.



## SUMMARY

## Madagascar faces up to the need for investment

Madagascar is looking at releasing its civil aviation authority, ACM, from operating 44 of the country's 56 airports, as it works towards greater liberalisation.

According to ACM's director, Jean Robert Razafy, the move will allow the authority more opportunity to focus on its overview of the industry, including the national carrier, 13 private airlines, and the other 12 airports already managed by Adema (Aéroports de Madagascar).

But Razafy argues that investment is needed if the world is to get the opportunity to marvel at the wildlife and beautiful sights available on 'The Big Island.'

In 1990, the Malagasy Government decided to promote the economic development of the country through tourism and export.

It has a policy to liberalise the air transport sector and offer efficient and competitive transport services.

But, according to the preliminary report of the Madagascar Ministry of Transport National Transportation Plan (2004-2020), there are concerns that the airports' technical equipment – and sometimes even their characteristics – are inadequate, absent or unworkable.

Safety is also of major importance for the future development of air transport in Madagascar and for the promotion of the tourism industry. The infrastructure at the country's domestic airports is not good. However, according to the report, the general level of professional training is good.

"Our airport infrastructure, and especially our seven international airports, comply with international ICAO regulations and are appropriate for use with the type of traffic that currently operates in Madagascar," Razafy said. But few international carriers have made use of the different airports.

Faced with the opportunities, challenges and globalisation of air transport, the country wants, above all, to strengthen the regulatory framework, the safety and security of the operation, and its capabilities.

Madagascar is also seeking to strengthen its existing cooperation arrangements and seek new development partnerships.

"We have had a lot of traffic demands from companies in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, as well as queries from Qatar, India and Sri Lanka recently," said Razafy. "We have many bilateral agreements, which are not operated in Africa, like with Namibia." Effective security is seen as essential.

"We are trying to install a security system in eight of our major airports. We put in place appropriate physical resources and high-tech equipment, such as detection systems, scanners, automatic doors, security doors, fences or cameras," Razafy said. "Our policy is to get a maximum number of passengers into the country. Madagascar wants to be connected, the centre of trade, and it is the infrastructure that we need to move forward," he concluded.



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*L'Union européenne a levé, en juillet dernier, une partie de ses interdictions de vols en Europe pesant sur Air Madagascar. Une bouffée d'oxygène pour la compagnie qui mène de nombreuses actions afin de renforcer la sécurité de ses vols et de pérenniser son réseau. Vincent Chappard a rencontré Hugues Ratsiferana, directeur général d'Air Madagascar, au siège de la compagnie, à Antananarivo.*



# AIR MADAGASCAR SUR TOUS LES FRONTS

«Blacklist boost for Air Madagascar» – Page 70

**A**u cours de la 21<sup>ème</sup> mise à jour de sa liste noire des compagnies aériennes, l'Union européenne (UE) a décidé d'autoriser une partie de la flotte d'Air Madagascar, à savoir dix appareils de la compagnie, à desservir l'Europe. Il s'agit de trois Boeing B737-300, deux ATR 72-500, d'un ATR 42-500, d'un ATR 42-320 et de trois DHC 6-300. Cette décision lui permet d'assurer à nouveau des dessertes vers La Réunion et Mayotte, qui font partie de l'Union européenne.

« Il ne faut pas uniquement se focaliser sur l'aspect de cette liste noire mais plutôt se concentrer sur la capacité technique, marketing et financière de la compagnie. Air Madagascar possède 52 années d'expérience dans le transport aérien et nous savons capitaliser sur celle-ci », affirme Hugues Ratsiferana, directeur général

d'Air Madagascar.

En 2011, l'UE avait émis des réserves sur l'exploitation de deux B767 sur l'Europe car elle avait constaté des défaillances techniques de même qu'au niveau de la qualité de la gestion de l'exploitation de ces avions. Il y avait également une incompréhension sur la manière dont l'aviation civile de Madagascar gère la surveillance des compagnies aériennes malgaches. L'ensemble des actions correctives ont été effectuées et la réponse d'Air Madagascar a été jugée satisfaisante par l'UE.

« Il y a une évolution constante dans le domaine du transport aérien et Air Madagascar essaie de se mettre à la hauteur des nouvelles exigences, renouvelle sa façon de travailler et réalise d'importants investissements sur le plan technologique. Sur le plan financier, cela dépend

plus de nos capacités marketing et de notre image vis-à-vis du marché », ajoute Hugues Ratsiferana.

C'est désormais l'aviation civile malgache qui gère ce dossier. Une visite de l'OACI est prévue pour le mois d'octobre alors que la prochaine réunion avec l'UE se tiendra en novembre 2013.

« Notre souhait est de sortir le plus rapidement possible cette liste de l'UE. C'est d'autant plus pénalisant parce qu'il y a une crise en Europe et que c'est de surcroît notre marché traditionnel. Nous avons également des actions très limitées sur le marché car celui-ci nous regarde d'un mauvais œil », précise Hugues Ratsiferana.

Les deux Boeing 767 mis en cause ne sont plus programmés pour le vol et vont quitter sous peu la flotte d'Air Madagascar. Il reste toutefois un petit bémol concernant les deux

Continuer à  
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## HUGUES RATSIFERANA

*De simple agent au sol, à commandant de bord puis directeur général d'Air Madagascar.*

Il y a des hommes dont le parcours et la personnalité forcent l'admiration, ceux qui marquent le transport aérien en Afrique de par leur persévérance, leur simplicité et leur humilité. Hugues Ratsiferana est de cette trempe-là. Il s'est ainsi forgé un destin singulier même si son parcours n'a pas été facile.

Fils d'un animateur rural, le jeune Hugues quitte Sonierana Ivongo, ses parents et ses 9 frères et sœurs à l'âge de 13 ans pour poursuivre ses études car il n'y avait pas de lycée dans son village natal. Il cumule des petits boulots pour vivre et financer ses études.

Motivé et brillant, il décroche son baccalauréat C. Après une année de service national, il intègre l'université de Madagascar pour une courte durée car grâce à un concours organisé par Air Madagascar, Hugues Ratsiferana est embauché à 19 ans comme agent au sol.

Après un passage au centre de formation de la compagnie, il occupe différents postes (agent de vente, caissier, accueil, enregistreur de passagers) puis il poursuit son parcours en devenant chef d'escale avant de devenir responsable d'agence. En 1990, Air Madagascar lance un concours de recrutement interne pour suppléer à un manque de pilotes et Hugues Ratsiferana est reçu.

□□□□□

Après 2 années de formation de pilote de ligne à Antananarivo, il devient pilote professionnel. Il vole sur différents types d'avions et devient commandant de bord sur Boeing 737 et copilote sur Boeing 767. Hugues Ratsiferana est plus qu'un pilote. C'est un visionnaire. En 2004, il dirige le département qualité et met en place le système qualité de la compagnie après avoir été administrateur de la sécurité des vols.

Ses compétences et son expérience au sein de la compagnie le propulsent en 2006 au poste de chargé d'études pour la direction générale avant d'être nommé directeur général d'Air Madagascar en 2011 après avoir suivi une formation en leadership organisée par la présidence de la République.

Hugues trouve également le temps et l'énergie pour d'autres activités et n'aime pas rester dans l'inertie. Il gère avec son épouse une entreprise familiale de production de légumes et de fleurs coupées, a participé à la relance de l'élevage d'Autruches à Mondarava, participe à des recherches sur les semi algues et préside encore le centre horticole d'Antananarivo.

Hugues Ratsiferana confiait d'ailleurs dans un livre sur la compagnie que lorsque qu'il avait 4 ans et qu'il vivait avec ses parents, il croyait que l'avion qui survolait son village était un oiseau. C'est ensuite à l'aéroport de Toamassina qu'il a pu voir de près cet oiseau qui « semblait avaler les hommes ». Parcours prédestiné ou fabuleux destin. C'est en tout cas une véritable "success story" qui peut inspirer plus d'un dans la Grande île et ailleurs.



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Airbus A340, qui restent toujours interdits de vol à destination de l'UE.

Air Madagascar a cependant continué à assurer son réseau entre la Grande île et l'Europe. Elle a fait le choix de coopérer avec la compagnie islandaise Air Atlanta qui répond à toutes les exigences en vigueur pour opérer dans l'espace européen. L'hébergement de l'immatriculation de l'Airbus A340-300 d'Air Madagascar s'est fait sous la tutelle de l'aviation civile islandaise.

Air Madagascar avait conclu, en avril 2012, un contrat ACMI (Aircraft, Crew, Maintenance & Insurance) avec Air France. Il a pris fin le 17 février 2013. Air France et Air Madagascar continuent à développer leurs relations et à travailler ensemble dans d'autres domaines notamment le partage de codes et la maintenance.

Air Madagascar opère toutefois un de ses A340 vers Guangzhou en République Populaire de Chine. L'aviation civile chinoise a en effet audité la compagnie aérienne avec le concours de l'aviation civile malgache et Air Madagascar est autorisée à desservir la Chine.

Air Madagascar cherche toutefois des relais de croissance. Elle a transporté environ 531 000 passagers par an en 2010, 552 240 en 2011 et 588 201 en 2012. Elle dispose de quatre destinations longs courriers (Paris, Marseille, Guangzhou et Bangkok) en exploitant ses A340. La compagnie a d'ailleurs ouvert une agence à Marseille en mai dernier. Elle a des vols réguliers sur le plan régional sur Johannesburg, Maurice, La Réunion, Mayotte, les Comores. Air Madagascar est la seule compagnie à desservir le réseau domestique avec ses Twin Otter.

La priorité reste cependant la survie de la compagnie, la viabilité de ses opérations et la création des liens avec le monde étant donné sa superficie. Prendre l'avion à Madagascar reste cependant très coûteux malgré le savoir-faire d'Air Madagascar. Le coût du pétrole à Madagascar est l'un des plus chers au monde. Il est par exemple moins chers de 18% à l'île de la Réunion et de 40% à Bangkok. Le poste du carburant représente 36% des charges pour Air Madagascar. Ses opérations sur le réseau domestique sont également onéreuses en raison d'importants coûts de maintenance et un marché restreint.

« Nous ne sommes pas compétitifs car nous avons beaucoup d'usures prématurées, nos pistes étant courtes et peu entretenues. Nous sommes obligés de changer régulièrement des garnitures de freins, de roues ou d'hélices », souligne Hugues Ratsiferana.

Le directeur général d'Air Madagascar raisonne davantage en terme de valeur économique pour l'océan Indien et milite pour une meilleure intégration régionale.

« Une sensibilité régionale au niveau de la commission de l'océan Indien est nécessaire pour définir un cadre économique global et un objectif précis en terme de recettes et de volume pour le tourisme. Les compagnies aériennes de la région cherchent seules de nouveaux passagers à transporter et il manque de synergies et de concertations entre les acteurs du secteur pour agir ensemble », regrette Hugues Ratsiferana.



Air Madagascar cherche avant tout à viabiliser ses opérations et à dimensionner son réseau en adéquation avec les demandes du marché. Un avion long courrier est utilisé pour voler environ 5 000 heures par an. Plus il y a de places occupées dans l'avion, plus il vole et plus la compagnie sera compétitive.

Air Madagascar ne reste pas pour autant les bras croisés pour assurer son développement. Madagascar est une destination très connue avec beaucoup de potentiel.

La compagnie prospecte de nouveaux marchés en Europe, en Amérique et en Asie notamment au Japon et dans le sud de la Chine comme Beijing ou Shanghai. Elle dispose déjà d'un marché important en Asie sur Guangzhou et à Bangkok.

La route vers Nairobi a cependant été arrêtée, la compagnie ayant peu de flexibilité en terme d'offres (2 vols par semaine). Des discussions sont en cours pour des partages de codes sur cette destination.

Le principal défi d'Air Madagascar est de gagner en compétitivité sur l'Afrique en assurant des vols plus fréquents pour donner plus de flexibilité aux passagers et ainsi devenir comme elle le souhaite, la compagnie aérienne préférée en Afrique et la première dans l'océan Indien.

## SUMMARY

## Blacklist boost for Air Madagascar

*The European Union lifted in July, part of its flight bans in Europe weighing on Air Madagascar. A breath of fresh air for the company that engages in many activities to strengthen the security of its flights and to sustain its network. Vincent Chappard met Hugues Ratsiferana, CEO of Air Madagascar, at the company's headquarters in Antananarivo.*

The European Union (EU) has agreed that Air Madagascar can use an additional aircraft on its European routes.

The carrier is on Annex B of the EU blacklist, which covers airlines restricted to operating only certain aircraft within the EU.

During the 21st update of its airlines blacklist in July, the EU has now agreed that 10 aircraft from the Air Madagascar fleet can serve the European market. They include three Boeing B737-300s, two ATR 72-500s, an ATR 42-500, an ATR 42-320 and three DHC 6-300s.

The decision has pleased airline CEO Hugues Ratsiferana, as it allows him to guarantee new routes to Reunion and Mayotte, part of the European Union.

Ratsiferana emphasised that getting off the blacklist was only one area where the carrier was making progress.



"We should not only focus on the blacklist but also on the technical, marketing and financial areas of the company," he said. "Air Madagascar has 52 years of experience in the airline industry and we know how to capitalise on that."

In 2011, the EU had expressed reservations about the operation of two B767s in Europe because it found technical failures in the aircraft's quality of management. There was also a misunderstanding about how Civil Aviation Madagascar managed monitoring Malagasy airlines.

All corrective actions have been completed and the Air Madagascar response was satisfactory to the EU, said the company.

Malagasy Civil Aviation now manages the situation. A visit to the ICAO is scheduled for October and the next meeting with the EU will be held in November 2013. The two B767s will also soon leave the fleet.

"There is a constant evolution in the field of aviation and Air Madagascar is striving to reach the new requirements, renew its way of working and make significant investments in technology," said Ratsiferana, who added that the company wanted to get off the blacklist as quickly as possible because Europe was a traditional market and with Europe viewing the company badly it limited market share opportunities.

According to Ratsiferana, Air Madagascar is seeking to grow. It carried about 531,000 passengers in 2010, 552,240 in 2011 and 588,201 in 2012.

The airline has four long-haul destinations – Paris, Marseille, Guangzhou and Bangkok – and it has also opened an office in Marseille.

It has regular regional flights to Johannesburg, Mauritius, Reunion, Mayotte, and Comoros and also serves the home network with its Twin Otter.

Unfortunately, flying to Madagascar remains expensive. The cost of oil in Madagascar is among the most expensive in the world – it is 18% cheaper on Reunion Island and 40% less in Bangkok.

Fuel represents 36% of Air Madagascar's costs and its operation in the home network is also expensive due to significant maintenance bills and a limited market.

However, despite its problems, Air Madagascar is determined to increase its competitiveness by providing more frequent flights and flexibility for passengers and become the preferred airline in the Indian Ocean.

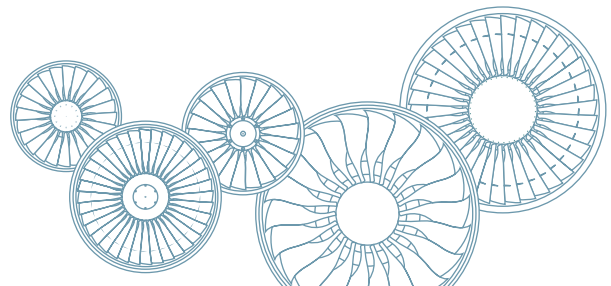


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Arrivée des premiers passagers à Maurice en provenance de Beijing.

PICTURE: MTPA

# AIR MAURITIUS ÉTOFFE SON RÉSEAU EN CHINE

*Air Mauritius a inauguré son premier vol direct sur Pékin le 6 juillet dernier augmentant ainsi ses fréquences en République populaire de Chine. La compagnie a également enregistré des résultats encourageants en juin dernier et mène toujours des discussions pour nouer un partenariat stratégique ou encore renouveler sa flotte d'avions. Une enquête de Vincent Chappard.*

**D**anse traditionnelle du lion et pétarades au quartier général d'Air Mauritius lors de la présentation à la presse et aux professionnels du tourisme du premier vol direct vers Beijing. Celui-ci a décollé le 8 juillet dernier et les premiers passagers de Beijing ont été accueillis dès leur descente d'avion le 10 juillet au rythme du séga mauricien. Air Mauritius compte désormais neuf vols sur la Chine, soit un sur Beijing, deux sur Shanghai, trois vols sur Hong-Kong, et trois autres en partance de la Chine via Kuala Lumpur.

La Chine est devenue un marché prioritaire tant pour l'industrie du tourisme que celle des affaires et de l'économie mauricienne. Les arrivées touristiques de l'Empire du milieu sont en effet en pleine croissance. De janvier à mai 2013, 14 182 Chinois sont venus à Maurice, soit une hausse de 72,6% par rapport à la même période en 2012. Beijing représente également un des plus importants hubs en Asie avec plus de 230 routes au départ de la capitale chinoise et plus de 80 millions de passagers par an.

« Les chiffres des arrivées touristiques vont doubler avec ce nouveau vol sur Beijing et nous nous mettons les bouchées doubles pour maintenir nos campagnes de promotion en Chine », affirme Michael Sik Yuen, ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs de l'île Maurice.

Ce vol direct vers Beijing vient aussi conforter la stratégie de la compagnie qui recherche de nouveaux leviers de croissance et de redéploiement de son réseau (rebalancing growth). Air Mauritius a annoncé le 13 juin dernier, des revenus opérationnels de 450 millions d'euros pour un résultat net négatif de 3,6 millions d'euros pour l'exercice financier 2012/2013. Ce résultat représente une forte amélioration de 25,6 millions d'euros, par rapport à l'exercice 2011/2012, en déficit

de 29,2 millions d'euros. Les arrivées depuis l'Europe ont en effet connu une baisse de 9%, la parité euro/dollar s'est dégradée de 6,6% et le prix du baril de pétrole est resté élevé à une moyenne de 112 dollars (USD).

« Nos marchés en Europe sont saturés et nous diversifions nos opérations en mettant plus de vols vers des destinations qui ont le plus de potentiel de croissance comme l'Inde, l'Afrique du Sud, l'Australie et bien entendu la Chine », déclare Raj Deenanath, directeur des ventes et de la distribution d'Air Mauritius.



Air Mauritius bénéficie également d'accords avec des compagnies comme China Eastern, Cathay Pacific ou Dragon Air pour assurer les liaisons domestiques en Chine et sur le continent asiatique. A noter que la diaspora chinoise est dynamique à Maurice même si celle-ci ne représente qu'environ 2% de la population.

Il reste à savoir jusqu'à quand Air Mauritius pourra assurer l'extension de son réseau et l'augmentation de ses fréquences surtout en période des vacances, sans avoir recours à l'achat ou à la location d'avions voire à des partages de codes.

« Nous avons assez d'avions dans notre flotte pour créer de nouvelles destinations et augmenter nos fréquences », assure Raj Deenanath.

Air Mauritius a en effet augmenté les dessertes vers l'Europe, l'Inde, Hongkong, Perth ou encore Nairobi, ouvert une nouvelle ligne sur Durban tout en créant de nouvelles routes directes sur Shanghai et Beijing.

Dass Thomas, président du conseil

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d'administration d'Air Mauritius, a rappelé lors de la dernière assemblée générale annuelle des actionnaires en juillet dernier, les mesures prises pour assurer la viabilité à long terme de la compagnie. Selon lui le véritable enjeu demeure le renouvellement de la flotte avec des avions de nouvelle génération. André Viljoen, directeur général de la compagnie, s'attend à ce qu'Air Mauritius renoue avec les profits d'ici à la fin de l'année financière en cours, soit d'ici mars 2014.

La compagnie opère actuellement une flotte comprenant quatre A340-300, deux A340-300E, deux A330-200, deux A319 et deux ATR72-500. Elle mène cependant des études pour acquérir de nouveaux avions, soit le Boeing 787 ou l'Airbus A350 pour une livraison au plus tôt en 2016/2017.

« L'étude n'est pas encore complétée. Le potentiel de divers marchés est minutieusement examiné et les perspectives de développement identifiées », précise Foad Nooraully, directeur juridique, de la communication et secrétaire général d'Air Mauritius, sans toutefois donner un calendrier.



La compagnie est toujours en discussion avec plusieurs compagnies pour nouer un partenariat stratégique.

« Air Mauritius explore des possibilités de renforcer ses partenariats existants tout en étudiant les opportunités pour un partenariat stratégique qui permettrait à la compagnie de trouver des synergies opérationnelles, de renforcer son réseau et de bénéficier d'un partage d'expertise et de formation. Ce partenariat se fera toutefois en veillant à ce que la compagnie conserve sa souveraineté et son identité », rappelle Foad Nooraully.

La compagnie a également annoncé en mars dernier un accord avec Emirates pour explorer de nouvelles opportunités commerciales. Les discussions se poursuivent en vue d'une plus grande collaboration commerciale. Des partages de code existent déjà entre les deux compagnies sur la desserte Dubaï-Maurice, avec 14 vols hebdomadaires assurés par Emirates. Celle-ci va opérer, à partir du 16 décembre 2013, un vol quotidien avec un A380 entre Dubaï et Maurice. L'A380 remplace l'un des deux B777-300 configurés en trois classes. Emirates proposera ainsi 156 sièges supplémentaires chaque jour sur cette route.

« En faisant voler l'A380 vers Maurice en mars dernier, nous avons pu constater l'intérêt de nos clients pour cet avion sur cette route. C'est une première pour les îles de l'océan Indien et nous sommes fiers d'offrir ce service sur une base quotidienne à partir de décembre 2013 », précise Thierry Antinori, vice-président exécutif d'Emirates.

Nouer des partenariats et dimensionner sa flotte d'avions restent donc des préoccupations majeures pour de nombreuses compagnies aériennes africaines et de l'océan Indien afin d'assurer un développement durable face à un marché compétitif.



## Inauguration du nouveau terminal de l'aéroport international de l'île Maurice

C'est sans doute l'une des plus impressionnantes infrastructures aéroportuaires réalisées dans l'océan Indien et du continent africain. Ce terminal conçu et réalisé par Airport Terminal Operations Ltd (ATOL), un partenariat entre Airports of Mauritius Co. Ltd et Aéroport de Paris Management, place l'île Maurice au standard des plus grands aéroports internationaux. En quelques chiffres, ce nouveau terminal représente un investissement de 305 millions de dollars, 3 années de construction, 14 000 tonnes d'éléments requis pour ériger sa structure en acier et une superficie de 56 900 mètres carrés.

« La finalité de cet ouvrage est de basculer dans une nouvelle aire en offrant plus de capacité aux compagnies aériennes et une meilleure satisfaction aux passagers à travers une meilleure qualité de services », a déclaré Bruno Mazurkiewicz, directeur général d'ATOL.

Au moment d'aller sous presse, la mise en service du nouveau terminal est prévue selon le calendrier, dans la nuit du 11 au 12 septembre 2013. De nombreux essais ont été effectués à ce jour.

« Nous sommes dans la phase ultime de notre infrastructure aéroportuaire c'est-à-dire la décontamination des installations qui vont nous permettre de nous mettre en position de sûreté, remplir les commerces et nous placer dans une configuration définitive pour faire des tests en

situation réelle avec des vols et des passagers des compagnies aériennes », a ajouté Bruno Mazurkiewicz.

L'ensemble des activités de l'aéroport basculera directement de l'ancien au nouveau terminal. Le terminal actuel fera l'objet de travaux de rénovation et concernera uniquement les zones de départs et d'arrivées des passagers, les autres opérations se feront désormais dans la nouvelle infrastructure.



« Nous allons prochainement débiter des aménagements du terminal actuel ainsi que la rénovation des salons réservés à la présidence et au gouvernement mauricien », a déclaré pour sa part Deva Thancanamootoo, directeur exécutif adjoint d'ATOL. « Un pont de connexion existe déjà entre l'ancien et le nouveau terminal et les travaux vont durer jusqu'à 2015-2016. »

Le nouveau terminal dispose de 54 comptoirs d'enregistrement, 26 postes d'immigration, 10 postes d'inspection et de filtrage au départ et de 36 postes de contrôle d'immigration, 12 postes de contrôle santé ainsi que de 6 carrousels de bagages à l'arrivée. Il dispose en particulier d'un système moderne de traitement des bagages (Bagage Handling system) qui comporte 5 niveaux de filtrage





Décollage d'un A340 d'Air Mauritius.  
A gauche: Inauguration du nouveau terminal par le Dr Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Premier ministre mauricien.

## SUMMARY

# New terminal at Mauritius

The new passenger terminal at Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport in Mauritius was inaugurated in an official ceremony in August.

This new facility with a total area of 57,000 square metres will cater for up to 4.5 million passengers a year, thus doubling the capacity of the country's international airport.

The terminal was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Dr Navinchandra Ramgoolam and will support the country in addressing issues related to the airport complex, which is the only tourist gateway connecting Mauritius with the rest of the world.

The project has taken three years to complete with investment amounting to \$305 million by the Government of Mauritius with the support of the China Exim Bank.

The new terminal has five new docking stations, in addition to the three existing ones and seven passenger boarding bridges for simultaneous handling of six wide-bodied aircraft.

At peak times, the terminal can handle up to 14 flight departures and arrivals.

The new parking area has room for a total of more than 600 vehicles and the raised access road to the terminal has two separate lanes to allow greater fluidity in the dropping off of passengers travelling to the airport by car or by bus.

avec 4 systèmes de contrôle à rayons X de Smiths Detection et un système de détection d'explosifs (EDS) de Safran Morpho. Une zone spécifique est également réservée aux vols domestiques.

De nombreux salons privés seront implantés au sein du nouveau terminal. Air Mauritius disposera de son salon d'environ 500m<sup>2</sup> et ATOL a également installé un salon privé design au sein du terminal. Même si la politique commerciale et le prix de ce dernier ne sont pas encore connus, ce service sera proposé aux hôtels, aux opérateurs du tourisme et aux compagnies aériennes. Ces salons privés viendront compléter le concept novateur et unique du YULOUNGE, situé à quelques encablures sur le tarmac de la piste.

Contrairement à ce que l'on pourrait pensé au niveau tarifaire, ATOL a rationalisé au maximum l'ensemble de ses coûts et le nouveau terminal opèrera quasiment à coût constant avec un meilleur standard de qualité selon Bruno Mazurkiewicz. La

société a par exemple mis en service des nouvelles ressources pour les compagnies aériennes pour optimiser leur mode de fonctionnement, en particulier au niveau des 7 passerelles télescopiques permettant la manutention simultanée de gros porteurs y compris l'A380. Il s'agit d'une décomposition minute par minute et le coût est par exemple de 17,8 roupies (environ 44 centimes d'euro) par minute pour les compagnies aériennes. C'est vrai que le pays est maintenant doté d'un bel aéroport moderne, il faut toutefois que les compagnies aériennes jouent le jeu, que les passagers viennent et que la destination soit plus attractive.

L'aéroport de Maurice traite en effet à ce jour entre 2 et 2,5 millions de passagers par an. Il reste donc aux autorités mauriciennes à adopter une politique plus audacieuse sur le transport aérien pour attirer davantage de passagers et exploiter de manière optimale cette nouvelle infrastructure.





*L'aéroport de La Réunion « Roland Garros » a lancé en 2012 un vaste plan de modernisation aéroportuaire. L'objectif est d'atteindre 3,5 millions de passagers en 2025 avec une infrastructure plus performante et de qualité, offrant toutes les garanties de sécurité et de respect de l'environnement. Une enquête de Vincent Chappard.*

# L'ÎLE TABLE SUR UNE CROISSANCE DURABLE

«Development begins at island's biggest airport» – Page 78

L'île de La Réunion, département d'outre-mer français d'environ 840 000 habitants au sud-ouest de l'océan Indien, dispose de deux aéroports internationaux : l'aéroport Roland-Garros, situé près de Saint-Denis et l'aéroport de Pierrefonds situé à Saint-Pierre, ce dernier assurant une liaison avec l'aéroport principal et quelques vols insulaires.

L'Aéroport Roland Garros n'a cessé de connaître des phases d'aménagement et d'extension au cours des précédentes décennies. Il anticipe sur la croissance du trafic d'ici 2025 (3,5 millions de passagers par an) et adapte également son infrastructure à des avions plus modernes. Ce programme sera financé par l'Union européenne, l'État, le Conseil régional et la société aéroportuaire à hauteur de plus de 200 millions d'euros.

« L'aéroport est dimensionné pour traiter 2,5 millions de passagers. Nous avons une typologie particulière de trafic avec l'ensemble des avions longs courriers qui arrivent le matin et repartent le soir. Avec un trafic moindre, nous avons par conséquent des installations qui sont en limites d'exploitation », affirme Jean-Paul Noel, président du directoire de l'aéroport Roland Garros de La Réunion.

Selon lui, les objectifs de ce programme



**«Des démarches ont été menées en Chine, au Moyen Orient ou en Asie et ce sont des marchés où nous espérons connaître une évolution du trafic.»**

JEAN-PAUL NOEL

d'investissement est de prendre en compte justifié par les évolutions du trafic de la plateforme aéroportuaire, sont de renforcer et mettre aux normes les pistes et taxiways, de mettre en conformité les systèmes de collecte et de gestion des eaux usées et d'augmenter la capacité de traitement de l'aérogare. Ce programme est mené en 2 étapes : d'une part, les travaux sur les pistes et la centrale électrique de 2011 à 2015 et de l'autre, le projet d'extension de l'aérogare de 2016 à 2020.

Les travaux d'élargissement et de renforcement des pistes et des taxiways constituent le principal chantier. Ils ont été officiellement lancés le 4 février dernier et se déroulent sur un aéroport en service. Ceux menés sur la piste longue ont engendré des indisponibilités à certaines périodes. Les compagnies aériennes ont du limité la charge au décollage pour faire un vol long courrier ou effectuer un vol sans charge puis procéder à une escale technique. Les travaux de la piste longue ont été achevés fin juin 2013. Ses accotements ont été portés de 7,5 mètres à 15 mètres de large, l'aéroport souhaitant accueillir les avions comme l'A380 ou le Boeing 787. Les travaux se poursuivent désormais sur la piste courte.

Continuer à la page 78



Extrême gauche: Salle d'embarquement de l'aéroport Roland Garros de La Réunion.  
Gauche: Les deux pistes de l'aéroport.  
Au-dessous: Vue aérienne de l'aéroport.  
Droit: Enregistrement à l'aéroport.



## Opération transparence sur les taxes aéroportuaires

Alors que le niveau très élevé des taxes suscite un vif débat au sein l'océan Indien, l'aéroport de La Réunion a pris une initiative intéressante en publiant une brochure sur la transparence de ses taxes d'aéroports. C'est une communication partagée par bon nombres d'aéroports regroupés sous l'égide Union des aéroports français.

« Concernant le montant des taxes et redevances payées sur un billet d'avion, le grand public a tendance à considérer que c'est l'aéroport qui perçoit l'ensemble du montant de ces taxes. Il paraît logique que l'information soit donnée afin d'apporter un éclaircissement », précise Jean-Paul Noel.

L'aéroport de La Réunion détaille les taxes et les redevances payées par le passager. On y trouve la taxe d'aéroport (perçue par les Etats et reversée à l'aéroport pour le financement des mesures de sûreté et de sécurité), la redevance passager (perçue par l'aéroport pour les services rendus au titre de l'utilisation de son aérogare), la taxe d'embarquement (en vigueur en Guadeloupe, Martinique, Guyane et à La Réunion), la taxe de l'Aviation Civile (perçue par l'Etat et qui finance le fonctionnement de l'administration) et la taxe de solidarité (dite taxe « Chirac », perçue par l'aviation civile qui la reverse ensuite pour financer un programme d'aide humanitaire) et enfin la surcharge de la compagnie aérienne. Si l'on prend un billet d'avion Paris - La Réunion (aller/retour), le montant des taxes est de 366,76€ sur un coût total de 1010,76€. Le montant réellement perçu par l'aéroport de La Réunion est de 26,68€, soit 7% des taxes d'aéroport et 2% du prix du billet. Le passager payera par exemple 117,50€ de taxes pour un billet La Réunion-Maurice qui coûte 238,75€ (prix constaté en mars 2013). L'aéroport de La Réunion Roland Garros percevra alors 21,68€.

Les taxes sur le transport aérien continueront cependant à faire débat alors que le gouvernement français a annoncé en juillet dernier que la taxe de solidarité sur les billets d'avions sera augmentée de 12,7% en 2014 en France afin d'accroître l'aide financière au développement. Cette décision s'inscrit dans le cadre du Comité interministériel de la coopération internationale et du développement.



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La phase de travaux 2012-2015 concerne également la construction d'un nouveau bâtiment. Il accueille les agences de voyage, le service parking et un bureau de change. Avec plus de place dans l'aérogare, la salle d'arrivée et de livraison des bagages et les salons réservés aux passagers à haute contribution ont été étendus. L'aérogare permettra d'accueillir 7 banques d'enregistrement et les comptoirs des compagnies aériennes. L'année 2014 sera consacrée à la construction d'un espace de nouveaux 3 parkings, d'un pôle de maintenance et de services aéroportuaires.

À l'horizon 2020, le terminal passagers sera étendu en vue de doubler ses capacités. Ce chantier s'accompagnera, en 2017, de la mise en place d'aires de sécurité et de la création de deux aires de stationnement supplémentaires.

Ces travaux permettront à l'aéroport de la Réunion d'augmenter ses capacités d'accueil de 2 millions de passagers actuellement à 3,5 millions d'ici 2025. Le trafic vers l'île de La Réunion est composé de deux tiers de passagers français et d'un tiers de passagers internationaux.



Il reste donc à l'île de la Réunion à stimuler son trafic sachant que la crise en Europe et en France engendre moins d'arrivées et que le marché est en saturation. Le secteur touristique de la région connaît des difficultés à progresser par rapport au développement du tourisme mondial. La concurrence demeure également vive entre les îles de l'océan Indien malgré l'émergence du concept des Iles Vanilles.

Les résultats du trafic au premier semestre 2013 montrent que le nombre global de passagers accueillis par l'aéroport Roland Garros a baissé de 5,5%, sous l'effet de la quasi disparition du trafic de transit de la compagnie XL Airways sur l'axe Mayotte-Marseille via La Réunion. En juin, la remontée du trafic a concerné les lignes entre la France et La Réunion (+1,6%), mais surtout les trois principaux axes régionaux : La Réunion-Maurice (+14,5%), La Réunion-Mayotte (+14,8%) et La Réunion-Afrique du Sud (+104%) par rapport à la même période en 2012. Il est en légère diminution sur la Thaïlande (-2,8%) et les Comores (-5,7%) et en baisse de 23,2% sur Madagascar. Au terme du premier semestre 2013, le nombre de passagers a reculé de 1,3% entre la métropole et La Réunion mais a

**SUMMARY**

## Development begins at island's biggest airport

**Reunion Island, the French territory in the heart of the Vanilla islands, has launched an ambitious development at the biggest of its two international airports.**

**Roland Garros Airport predicts growth to 3.5 million passengers over the next 12 years and, following a detailed study, has begun a \$250 million development to meet the new numbers and cater for modern aircraft.**

**The European Union, the French Government, the regional council and the airport company are funding the programme.**

**"The airport is designed to handle 2.5 million passengers. We have a particular type of traffic with all long-haul aircraft arriving in the morning and leaving at night," said Jean-Paul Noel, CEO of the airport company.**

**According to Noel, this means the airport is over capacity at certain times of the day and quiet at others.**



**Reunion has seen a 5.5% fall in traffic over the past year, mostly as a result of the virtual disappearance of transit traffic from the XL Airways Mayotte-Marseille axis via the island.**

**However, the latest figures back the airport's estimates, with South African flights more than doubling.**

**Roland Garros Airport has predicted an average annual increase in traffic of about 1.5% to 2% for the next 10 years.**

**According to Noel, the investment programme has initially focused on widening and strengthening the runways and taxiways.**

**It is now working on the construction of a new building to add more space in the terminal, the arrival and delivery of baggage area, and additional lounge area.**

**The airport is looking to open more trade routes as the numbers from Europe have reduced. "Reunion Airport enjoys solid numbers from France and also Indian Ocean trade, especially Mauritius," said Noel. However, it currently lacks routes to China, the Middle East and mainland Africa.**

progressé de 4,3% sur l'île Maurice, de 15,3% sur Mayotte et de 1,6% sur l'Afrique du Sud. Le premier semestre 2013 est également marqué par la réduction de l'offre des compagnies aériennes : le nombre de mouvements d'avions a diminué de 10,7% par rapport au premier semestre 2012. Malgré ces résultats, l'aéroport Roland Garros table sur une augmentation du trafic de l'ordre de 1,5% à 2% en moyenne annuellement pour les dix prochaines années.

« L'aéroport de la Réunion bénéficie d'un trafic solide à partir de la France mais également au sein de l'océan Indien, et en particulier l'île Maurice », souligne Jean-Paul Noel.

L'aéroport de la Réunion cherche toutefois des leviers de croissance. Toutefois ce dernier ne dispose pas de routes vers la Chine ou le Moyen-Orient. L'Afrique est également peu desservie.


« Les discussions sur les droits de trafic se font suivant les échanges et le positionnement de la Réunion. L'ouverture du ciel par les instances décisionnelles pour desservir un pays se réalise en fonction de la population réunionnaise », rappelle Jean-Paul Noel. « Des démarches ont été menées en Chine, au Moyen Orient ou en Asie et ce sont des marchés où nous espérons connaître une évolution du trafic. »




La population réunionnaise est en effet originaire de Madagascar, de l'est de l'Afrique continentale, de l'ouest et du sud-est de l'Inde, du sud de la Chine et bien sûr de la France. Le développement du trafic aérien concernera à court terme l'Afrique et l'Inde. Air Austral a pris le pari de desservir la route Bangkok via Chennai. Celle-ci donne d'excellents résultats et la compagnie envisage de la développer davantage. Air Austral souhaite aussi accroître le nombre de passagers en provenance d'Afrique du Sud de 2 000 à 8 000 par an.


Comme le souligne justement Jean-Paul Noel, les compagnies aériennes développent les dessertes en fonction du marché et de la viabilité des opérations. L'aviation civile a quant à elle un rôle de contrôle. L'Aéroport de La Réunion Roland Garros est non seulement un prestataire de services mais également un acteur du développement économique et touristique de l'île au même titre que la Région et l'Etat français. La connectivité et le transport aérien en sont des maillons indispensables.

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## Chapman Freeborn proceeding with caution...

*Despite being a long-term operator on the continent, Chapman Freeborn has only recently established a base in Africa.*

**Tom Pleasant** talked to regional manager Iain Clark about the opportunities and challenges for African charter work.

**A**ir cargo is a key indicator of economic health. So, at a time when the global cargo industry is still struggling, charter broker Chapman Freeborn launching intra-African scheduled freighter services highlights how Africa, at least, continues to see robust cargo demand.

But, as many non-African carriers have learned to their cost, opportunities do not mean easy wins.

"People are a lot more cautious of operating into Africa now," said regional manager Iain Clark. "They tried to capitalise on the African growth but a lot of those operating here 10 or 15 years ago have now disappeared."

The charter broker opened its first offices in Uganda and South Africa in 2011. Even before then, Clark said, the company recognised the need for local knowledge.

"Even before we had registered offices in Entebbe, we still had the right contacts on the ground to get the jobs done," Clark added. "There are certain parts of the region where it's still difficult to land or to ensure a supply of fuel, and that does make it a little more challenging about which aircraft you use, but it's a lot better than it used to be."

The new scheduled flight, which started in June this year, uses a DC8-73 freighter with a payload of 40 tonnes. It leaves from Johannesburg every Thursday to Lubumbashi and Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Chapman has also been operating a McDonnell Douglas MD-11, which can carry 85 tonnes, flying between Johannesburg and Entebbe every Tuesday.

On the smaller side, the company has based a Fokker F27 aircraft at Entebbe for more than a year. It only has a maximum uplift of 5.8 tonnes but has, so far, been ideal for servicing the burgeoning mining, oil and gas, and



**Iain Clark: the market remains tough.**

telecommunications industries, along with humanitarian relief work.

"We're mainly focused on the mining sectors at the moment. There's a lot of growth in west Africa but elsewhere will see a lot more demand in the future. We have scheduled freighter flights for the mines to Mwanza Airport in northern Tanzania and to places such as Mogadishu, Somalia; Bunia, in the eastern DRC; and South Sudan."

Chapman Freeborn is also involved with regular shipments

of emergency supplies for aid work and a few construction projects. "Those are in the planning stage at the moment but we're confident they will come through," said Clark.

Nonetheless, even with the continent's growth, Clark says the charter market remains tough. Until recently, this was mainly due to the huge amount of capacity following non-African carriers' decision to fly larger aircraft, more frequently to South Africa and, increasingly, elsewhere on the continent. Flooding the market caused a lot of damage, leading those airlines to scale back their operations considerably.

"Carriers are looking at more cost-effective alternatives so they are considering flying into Lagos or Accra first. However, it still makes a lot of sense to come straight to South Africa," he said.

Chapman Freeborn is trying to differentiate itself by offering value-added services.

"We operate for major organisations – the United Nations, the military – where we have to be completely compliant and supply due diligence. That carries over to the commercial sector and we like to think that added value is appreciated," said Clark. "With us you may have to pay a little more but then you get the expertise and security."



*It's not just humans that experience air travel. Many pets and animals are exposed to flying for various reasons and in June, for nine silverback gorillas, it meant a journey back to the wild. Marcelle Nethersole reports.*

**F**or airline staff, it's quite a feat to make sure passengers are safely on board and looked after for the entire duration of a flight.

Imagine the logistical nightmare, then, when nine silverback gorillas needed to be transported 9,000km from Port Lympne Wild Animal Park in Kent, England, to the Batéké Plateau National Park in Gabon.

That was the task put square and central in front of logistics company DHL as part of a unique conservation initiative in partnership with the Aspinall Foundation.

A 30-year-old silverback called Djala, his four mates and their four infants, aged between eight months and six years, departed from the UK to Brussels before being flown in a specially equipped Boeing 767 to Lagos, Nigeria, and then on to Franceville, Gabon on a B737.

For the final leg of the journey they were flown in a helicopter to the national park in collaboration with the Gabonese authorities.

The gorillas were put in bespoke travelling crates to ensure their safety. Along with the animals, which had a combined weight of 620kg,



Gorilla Family Group at Port Lympne Wild Animal Park.

PICTURE: DAVE ROLFE

# GORILLAS

200kg of vets' equipment and food – mainly water and a selection of fruit – accompanied them on their journey home to the wild.

For DHL, it meant taking the two different aircraft out of commission and temporarily reconfiguring its global network to ensure the gorillas could be delivered in as tight a timeframe as possible.

Phil Couchman, CEO of DHL Express UK & Ireland said: "It's no mean feat moving a family of nine gorillas across the world. This was an extremely important cause and a great logistical undertaking – our priority throughout the operation had been the safety and well-being of the animals."

Western lowland gorillas are classed as a

## SOMMAIRE

## Des gorilles dans les airs

*Ce n'est pas uniquement les êtres humains qui voyagent par avion. Plusieurs espèces d'animaux sont également amenés à voler et ce fut le cas pour le retour à la vie sauvage de neuf gorilles au dos argenté en juin dernier.*

*Un récit de Marcelle Nethersole.*

S'assurer du confort et de la sécurité des passagers pendant toute la durée du vol demeure une prouesse pour le personnel des compagnies aériennes. Imaginez maintenant le casse-tête logistique quand neuf gorilles au dos argenté doivent être acheminés de la réserve d'animaux sauvages de Port Lympne dans le comté de Kent en Angleterre jusqu'au parc national des plateaux de Batéké au Gabon. Les gorilles ont voyagé dans des caisses spéciales sur mesure avec environ 200 kilogrammes de matériel et de nourriture. La société DHL a relevé ce défi en partenariat avec la Fondation Aspinall.

Neuf gorilles ont ainsi effectué un véritable périple de 9000 kilomètres : Partis du Royaume-Uni, ils ont transité par Bruxelles, pris un Boeing 767 pour Lagos au

Nigéria avant de rejoindre Franceville au Gabon à bord d'un Boeing 737 pour finir leur trajet en hélicoptère avec la collaboration des autorités gabonaises.

DHL a ainsi réquisitionné deux avions et une équipe dédiée pour assurer cette mission.

Phil Couchman, PDG de DHL Express du Royaume Uni et d'Irlande a déclaré : « Ce n'est pas un mince exploit de déplacer une famille de neuf gorilles et notre priorité fut la sécurité et le bien-être des animaux ».

Ces gorilles sont en effet considérés comme une espèce en voie d'extinction et ce fut la première tentative de retour d'une famille dans leur habitat naturel.

DHL avait déjà participé en 2012 au déplacement de trois rhinocéros noirs pour le compte du parc national

de Kilimanjaro en Tanzanie ou encore deux tigres de Sumatra pour le zoo de Londres dans le cadre d'un programme d'élevage international.

Damian Aspinall, président de la Fondation Aspinall, nous rappelle l'importance de ces initiatives : « Ces retours à l'état sauvage visent à réintroduire le plus grand nombre d'espèces en danger dans la nature jamais entrepris dans le monde. C'était la première fois qu'une famille de gorilles retournait en Afrique et nous sommes ravis de l'implication de DHL et de nos partenaires. »

Ce périple aérien restera gravé sans aucun doute comme l'opération la plus risquée et la plus courageuse jamais réalisée par la Fondation Aspinall et DHL.



DHL's Boeing 767 on the runway ready to deliver the gorillas.

# IN THE MIDST

critically endangered species and this was the first ever attempt at returning an entire family to its natural habitat.

“In working closely with The Aspinall Foundation, a world-leading conservation charity, to prepare for the move, we ensured the smoothest possible journey for the gorillas,” said Couchman.

The Aspinall Foundation's 'Back to the Wild' initiative is part of its on-going commitment to restock indigenous habitats with endangered and critically endangered species, following its uniquely successful programmes of captive breeding in Kent.

For DHL this wasn't the first time it has transported animals back to the wild.

“DHL has experience across its entire network. In 2012 we were involved in managing the movement of three critically endangered black

rhinos as part of a conservation initiative, also by The Aspinall Foundation, from Manston Airport, Kent, to the Kilimanjaro National Park in Tanzania,” said Couchman.

“The movement of the three black rhinos, which were born in captivity at The Aspinall Foundation's Port Lympe Wild Animal Park, was part of an initiative to reinforce the reintroduced population of eastern black rhinoceros in the Mkomazi Rhino Sanctuary, Tanzania, with the support of Tusk Trust, a dynamic conservation organisation.”

Last year DHL also moved two Sumatran tigers from the USA and Australia to London Zoo to take part in an international breeding programme.

Charles Brewer, managing director for DHL Express sub-Saharan Africa, added: “Our dedicated special delivery team, which includes

staff from aircraft engineers to cargo handlers, security teams, pilots and drivers, have done an excellent job of ensuring the success of this project. We're delighted to have been of assistance to the gorilla family and we hope they enjoy their new home.”

Damian Aspinall, pioneering conservationist and chairman of The Aspinall Foundation, said: “Our Back to the Wild initiative is unique and comprises the most ambitious reintroduction of critically endangered species into the wild ever undertaken anywhere in the world.

“This was the first time that anyone had delivered a whole gorilla family back to Africa. It could have gone horribly wrong. We were delighted that DHL generously came on board as our partners in this important and exciting repatriation project. This was, without question, the riskiest and bravest thing we've ever done.”



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# Kenya freight potential fuels terminal development

*September saw the opening of Siginon Aviation's state-of-the-art cargo terminal in Nairobi and Keith Mwanalushi spoke to the company's divisional manager to uncover how the new facility has prepared for the expectations of a boom in Kenya's cargo traffic.*



**Grace Obuki:** "The facility allows for increased cargo throughput."

According to a 2013 economic survey, Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) handled 279 million tonnes of cargo in 2012, down from 286 million in 2011.

Loaded cargo at JKIA dropped by 3.4%, from 227 million tonnes to 219 million. The decline in cargo traffic was a result of reduced demand for fresh produce and traditional horticultural exports from major European markets. However, as the sector recovers from the Euro crisis, export volumes are once again expected to rise.

In addition, an expected boom in exports and imports, partly caused by the growing construction sector as well as the discovery of oil and gas in Kenya, has triggered freighters and transporters in the country to begin investing in storage space facilities.

East Africa's cargo business is set to further receive a boost in handling capacity following the September 2013 launch of Siginon Aviation's airside cargo terminal at JKIA. The company began its operations as a ground handling facility at the airport in 1997.

"Over time, the market and customer dynamics have demanded modern infrastructure to meet the need as well as enhance service delivery," said Siginon Aviation divisional manager Grace Obuki.

Therefore, in 2011, the company embarked on the construction of a \$10 million cargo facility on the airside of JKIA.

Before establishing the new cargo facility, the team at Siginon embarked on a customer survey to identify key needs. The responses shaped the design, as well as key facilities and expertise required, for an optimal air cargo operational facility.

Obuki added that industry trends were analysed to identify best practice globally for an air cargo terminal. The new facility is supposedly benchmarked against leading air cargo terminals globally. "The facility allows for increased cargo throughput to and from the airside. Ultimately this will

contribute to greater cargo handling efficiency and reduction of operational costs," she said.

"The cargo terminal on the airside of JKIA greatly contributes towards safety and security, allowing for fewer loopholes and limiting opportunities for tampering with cargo. Throughout the handling process, fewer people come into contact with the cargo, ensuring the whole process is sterile with no room for pilferage," she elaborated.

The new terminal includes a general cargo warehouse with an annual throughput of 60,000 tonnes; specialised storage areas for dangerous goods (DGR), temperature sensitive and oversized cargo; 2,000sqm of basement parking for transit vehicles; as well as office space to cater for customer service, banking halls, revenue authorities and airline offices.

In order to cater for a revival in flower exports, the terminal includes a perishables centre with 5,000sqm of cold room floor space and storage space for 100 units to palletised cargo.

Trucks will also have off-loading dock levellers within a temperature-controlled area with elevated workstations.

The new cargo facility should ideally go hand-in-hand with the much-publicised (but heavily delayed) expansion and modernisation of JKIA.

Obuki remains optimistic that the planned expansion of the JKIA terminal creates exciting possibilities for ground operators there. "With the expansion, JKIA will be able to accommodate more and bigger (wide-bodied) aircraft and this will offer great potential in cargo volumes ferried to and from the airport.

"In addition, the JKIA improvements will expand fuelling systems, increase aircraft parking space, and optimise aircraft movements with additional taxi ways, including separate arrival and departure taxis."

She stressed that, with more capacity, JKIA would attract and accommodate more international airlines, thus boosting cargo volumes shipped in transit to other points from Kenya.

**"The market and customer dynamics have demanded modern infrastructure to meet the need as well as enhance service delivery."**  
GRACE OBUKI





**Phyl Durdey:** "We still need to reach the African community."

## Canada breathes life into Nairobi training centre

*Toronto-based Flightline Training Services (FTS) opened a new technical training facility at Nairobi's Wilson Airport in September and, as CEO Phyl Durdey tells **Marcelle Nethersole**, he hopes it will become Africa's training hub.*

**Kenyan students for the technical training available at Wilson Airport.**



**F**TS isn't a stranger to Nairobi's Wilson Airport. It has been training technicians, employed by many of the facility's operators, for more than five years.

But on a recent visit to the airport several customers asked CEO Phyl Durdey if FTS could establish a permanent training facility in Nairobi.

"On hearing the request, we decided that opening a training centre would greatly contribute to the aviation community," said Durdey. "There would no longer be a need to send technicians abroad to receive training. They would now be able to receive affordable quality training right here in Nairobi."

The training centre will not only focus on the operators at Wilson Airport, but also the entire east African region.

"A global marketing initiative is currently under way to promote the centre to all operators of commuter aircraft and MRO facilities on the African continent," explained Durdey.

"In January 2013, FTS inaugurated its training centre in Johannesburg, South Africa. This facility provides technical training on the de Havilland Dash-8 Q400 and the Bombardier CRJs. With Kenya being easily accessible from all surrounding countries, we are hopeful that Nairobi will become the hub for technical training and that our facility

will be the first choice for African operators and MROs."

But it's marketing of the training centre that Durdey feels will be the company's biggest challenge.

"Even though FTS has been predominant in Africa for more than five years, we still need to reach the African community and let them know that a world-class training facility is here for them in Nairobi. We provide low-cost training that will ultimately largely contribute to the airlines' low operational costs."

Durdey, a licensed pilot, was in the Canadian Air Force as an aircraft technician for ten years before joining FlightSafety Canada as an instructor. He was later promoted to supervisor of maintenance training but left to set up FTS in 2001.

Today, FTS is Canada's largest aircraft technical training organisation, providing training on aircraft ranging from small twin-engine props, like the King Air 200, to the wide-bodied Boeing 777. It currently holds 31 Transport Canada and 17 EASA approvals.

Durdey believes FTS's technical training will help increase aviation safety within Africa.

"Our core business and area of expertise is, and always has been, technical training," he said. "One of our strongest attributes is that our instructors are training professionals and subject experts in their own specific discipline. The work experience of the instructor is transmitted throughout the training programme to enhance the overall knowledge of the student. The instructors also ensure they promote safety and efficient work ethics to the students. They also emphasise the human factors aspect of their daily routine.

"Additional time and curriculum is added if required to make certain the training objectives are met."

He concluded: "Our ultimate goal is to ensure that the students have received an unparalleled knowledge of the aircraft, as well as safety when they return to their base."



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Much of the MPL programme focuses on simulator training. Right, successful Ethiopian students. Bottom: Ground school is vital.

*In Ethiopia there is a proverb that says a house can't be built for the rainy season that is past. The message is clear – you need to be prepared before an event, not afterwards and, as **Victoria Moores** finds out, that is exactly the approach that Ethiopian Airlines is taking by pioneering the multi-crew pilot licence (MPL) in Africa.*

# What a swell party this is...

The rationale is simple. Ethiopian is pursuing an ambitious growth strategy that will see its fleet swell from 58 to 112 aircraft by 2025.

More aircraft means more pilots, so it has turned to the MPL programme to deliver new pilots into its operation.

“If we want to satisfy pilot demand under Vision 2025, we will need better quality, more effective and efficient pilots at a faster rate, explained Ethiopian Airlines VP flight operations Captain Zeru Desta.

“MPL is the only option we have. This is a very good and effective way of addressing the pilot shortage as we go through this period of rapid growth.”



First devised by ICAO in 2006, MPL is an ab initio pilot training programme that takes a zero-hour student to commercial airline first officer-level within 14-18 months. It is a hands-on course that focuses on the skills that commercial pilots need from day one.

“Traditionally, pilots qualify on Cessnas but they don't have any experience of multi-pilot aircraft, crew resource management (CRM) and the airline environment,” said Desta. “Instead MPL is a very focused training programme, which prepares pilots for the airline cockpit and puts them right into the airline environment from the very beginning.”

When studying for the traditional commercial pilots' licence (CPL), trainees typically accumulate 200-250 hours on single-pilot



aircraft. Conversely, MPL students only build up around 72 hours before diving into 280-350 hours on multi-pilot flight procedures trainers, non-motion and full-motion simulators.

Andrew Lucas, president of training specialist FlightPath International, draws a parallel with learner drivers. “A CPL is like someone saying, ‘I may not be able to drive a car, but I can ride a motorbike really well’. The difference is the proficiency level. We are now training pilots how to fly for an airline, rather than teaching them how to fly.”

MPL students are sponsored by the airline, which must commit to hiring them when they graduate from the programme. With CPL there is no such guarantee. In return, with MPL, the training is totally tuned to the sponsoring airline and students learn the standard operating procedures (SOPs) of that specific carrier. They also gain experience of flight deck integration

and CRM during the hands-on course, which gives them intense exposure to the aircraft type that they will ultimately be flying.

Unlike the CPL, MPL is type-specific. However, MPL takes around 16 months to complete, compared with up to two-and-a-half years for a CPL. In addition to graduating sooner, MPL pilots also come on to the line with a higher proficiency and readiness for working in a commercial airline cockpit.

“When MPL students graduate, they walk into the flight operations department with roughly 400 hours of flight time, with three-quarters or more of that on the Boeing 737. Compared with 250 hours on the Cessna, the delta is huge,” explained FlightPath International VP airline operations Rudy Toering.

Desta agreed: “By the time MPL students graduate there is no issue with putting them in



the cockpit and letting them fly. They are better qualified in terms of quality and safety, with a high level of knowledge and skills. They easily integrate into flight operations, are proactive, assertive and have strong leadership skills, which will make them very effective captains further down the line.”

But MPL training is still being beta-tested; meaning only a few airlines have trained pilots this way to date. As well as Ethiopian, these include AirAsia, Dragonair, EasyJet, Flybe and Tigerair.

These airlines and their training partners feed data to ICAO, which closely monitors and analyses the various MPL programmes. “It is a partnership between the airline, training organisation and the local authority,” explained Toering. “The programme does not take place unless that partnership exists. MPL isn’t

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new but it is new in a lot of places and FlightPath took on the role of working alongside Ethiopian and their authorities, who were not familiar with MPL. We helped them through the process.”

Ethiopian began looking into MPL in 2009 and started negotiations with FlightPath in 2010. “They really did their homework,” said Lucas. Ethiopian finally inked a contract with FlightPath in August 2011 and implementation of the MPL programme began in autumn that year. Initially the type-specific MPL training was for 737s, but later waves will be trained on the Bombardier Q400.

Under the agreement, FlightPath is responsible for overseeing the training of 96 student pilots, divided into four waves, over three-and-a-half years. The first wave of 26 trainees and instructors began their course in October 2011 and graduated this spring. Once the students complete the course, they perform a touch-and-go to graduate to the airline. “There is nothing more gratifying than seeing the first students doing that touch-and-go in a 737 with only the most minor of hiccups,” said Toering.

The second wave of 22 students, trained by Ethiopian’s Aviation Academy under FlightPath’s supervision, are now in the final stages of their course. FlightPath has delegated the leadership of the third and fourth waves directly to Ethiopian, having progressively stepped back to a quality assurance and monitoring role. “Rather than them working with us, we are now working with them. By backing away, we are helping them to become self-sufficient,” explained Lucas.

“This is the one big commercial difference we bring to MPL. We train the airline in how to deliver the programme, then we hand it to them and audit them for quality control, but then they own the programme.”



With the Ethiopian project now hitting maturity, FlightPath is finalising its next projects. “Today we are only working with Ethiopian,” said Lucas, “but we are in final negotiations with another airline in Africa and we are in the middle of negotiations with an Americas-based airline.”

“We have been working with the African airline for almost eight months now and we are helping them understand the structures needed in preparation for MPL. You can’t just go to ABC Airlines and say ‘sign here, we’ll start next month’. There is a lot of preparation work with the authorities that takes eight months to a year before you can start the MPL programme.”

Selection is a core part of MPL, which is very much competence-based and paced to suit individual students. Most of the Ethiopian recruits

were high-level college or university graduates, aged around 21. After a rigorous selection process, Ethiopian selected a group of quick learners who were ambitious, tech-savvy and able to cope with the demands of the programme.

“Our flight operations staff have been involved right from the beginning to the end, from selecting the pilots, to the ground school, through every phase of the training to the final 737 type rating. We have had the chance to witness the end product of MPL. We are very pleased. It has gone way beyond our expectations and overall it has worked really,



Ethiopian plans to attract the Q400 to the region.

really well. We had no drop-outs, no failures and it was a 100% success,” said Desta.

Despite the success of the MPL programme, the Ethiopian flight ops VP admits that the process has had its challenges, ranging from getting the authorities on board, heavy investment requirements and keeping the demanding schedule on track. “In the beginning, it was a new concept so people weren’t very comfortable with the programme but once we saw the details of the syllabus, we felt it was the right way to go. Everyone, from the CEO to the ground floor, has been following the programme very closely. It was new to all of us. It was the first African MPL programme and one of very few in the world.”

In parallel with the MPL programme, Ethiopian has just completed construction of a new flight operations and training building, which will soon be inaugurated. “The idea is that we will have this training facility approved by EASA and other major regulators. We will have a type rating training organisation and our plan is to attract Q400, 737, 757, 767 and 787 to our country and region.”

With this in mind, Ethiopian has invested in state-of-the-art equipment for the new training centre to support the MPL programme, as well as adding a second 737NG and a Q400 full-flight simulator. It now has a total of five full-flight simulators covering the Q400, 737NG, 757/767 and 787 – three are new.

“We really invested a huge amount of money in equipment, technology and infrastructure for the MPL programme but we will reap the

benefits as we go along. Ultimately we will get pilots on the line much quicker and cheaper than before and from day one we are preparing the students to be professional pilots,” said Desta.

Ethiopian is also continuing to offer traditional CPL training alongside the MPL programme. “We have not closed down the traditional training; we still have pilots graduating because we want to continue to provide services to other countries who want the traditional CPL. For some time these two programmes will run in parallel. I can’t say how long this will last, as it depends on demand. We plan to accept and train CPL pilots

for a few years but MPL is new and as we pick up experience we plan to conduct MPL training for other countries on the 737 and Q400.”

The next stage for Ethiopian is training its first batch of MPL pilots on the Q400, which will see it invest in new procedures trainers, flight training devices and desktop trainers from CAE, joining the new Q400

simulator that arrived three months ago.

“It is a huge expansion for us and we have to run the main operation at the same time, including our in-house recurrent and upgrade training. We are very busy,” said a remarkably relaxed Desta.

The new training centre will also offer technician, airport operations and cabin crew training. “The scope of the academy will be very wide. It will primarily address the resource training requirements of the airline, but we are planning to be an African centre of excellence in aviation training,” he added.

MPL-trained students cost a similar or slightly higher amount than CPL-trained pilots, especially as airlines transition to the programme and get over the hump of the initial investment. But the pilots come online faster, sliding straight into that right hand seat, and time is money.

Lucas said: “We have parked our tent in Africa. This is not an emerging

market, it is a thriving market. Internationally a pilot shortage is looming and many countries in Africa want to be self-contained. They don’t want expats flying; they want home-grown pilots from their own universities and academies. If you ask me where the greatest need for MPL is worldwide, I would say Africa, Africa, Africa. MPL is needed here. It is a no-brainer and it will help the whole country, not just the airline itself.”

With African aviation set to grow 7-8% for at least the next five years, airline resources must keep pace. Ethiopian is definitely getting its house in order and will be ready and prepared for the incoming storm of pilot demand.

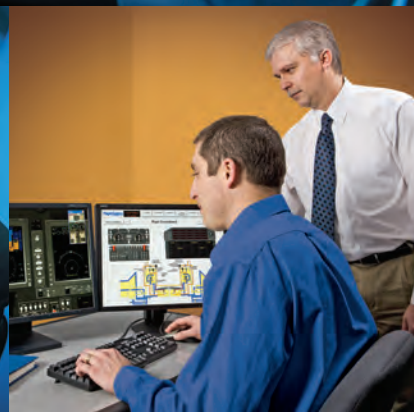
**“If you ask me where the greatest need for MPL is worldwide, I would say Africa, Africa, Africa.”**

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*The Alenia Aermacchi SF-260TP is a small aircraft that punches well above its weight as **Justin Paines**, chief flying instructor with the Empire Test Pilots' School, found out on a recent flight test.*

# Light trainer that packs a heavy punch



The SF-260 – clean, well-balanced lines. The large bubble canopy gives an excellent field of vision.

In terms of cost and size, the Alenia Aermacchi SF-260TP is typical of aircraft used by military forces for elementary flight screening and training.

Size apart, it has the look, feel and performance of large single turbo-prop trainers fielded by Aermacchi's competitors. However, it retains the life-cycle cost benefit of a much lower-performance aircraft.

I assessed the aircraft at Alenia Aermacchi's plant near Milan in Northern Italy, enjoying the hospitality of my old colleague Quirino Bucci, the company's chief test pilot and a graduate of the Empire Test Pilots' School.

After the necessary (and mercifully short) briefings and pre-flight preparation, Bucci and I walked out to the aircraft. Frankly, it was nothing special to look at. Yes, it had pleasing lines, a clean, well-balanced appearance, a little style provided by the wing-tip fuel tanks. But in all other respects it was single-prop light aircraft, such as you might expect when taking your first flying lesson.

However, the aircraft is "a lot more" than it first appears. Its relatively thin wing section, for example, (better for higher speed flight) began to reveal hidden promise. A single step on to the wing root provided easy access to the cockpit, which appeared spacious, despite its relatively small dimensions.

The cockpit was intelligently laid out and

boasted two large multifunction displays – an installation developed for the SF-260 but based heavily on the Avidyne Entegra.

Within these displays comes more capability than in many fighter aircraft; moving map, flight management system, and systems displays were all available. Certainly, the central up-front controller functionality was representative of many fighter types.



It was late morning by now on a hot day so it was a relief, on strapping into the aircraft, to feel a cool, air-conditioned blast powered by the ground power unit (a simple external battery cart) even before engine start – a definite comfort enhancement to help reduce pilot fatigue.

Start-up was simple and rapid, with aircraft avionic systems (including the inertial platform) brought online by a single switch under battery power, prior to engine start.

The external field of view on the ground was excellent. The nose of the aircraft, sized for the powerful turbine, seemed long and slightly restricted the forward view from the aircraft centreline. However, the nose was also narrow and, overall, the geometry combined with the side-by-side seating and large bubble canopy to give an excellent field of view.

Directional control during taxi was conventional via the rudder pedal-actuated nosewheel steering, and was predictable and easy to operate with a light, responsive feel. The steering did not centre itself on release of foot pressure, which might have been expected to create some problems in fine direction control (such as taxiway centreline maintenance) but no problems were apparent during the taxi tasks I assessed.

With full rudder pedal deflection (but without use of brakes), minimum turning radius was exceptional – just 14 feet or so. Coupled with the excellent field of view, the aircraft should be easy to operate in confined spaces.

The only characteristic that had a slightly harsh feel was the power control. The engine is controlled by a thrust lever as well as a conditioning lever which is used to set operating mode and propeller RPM. But with such power available 'under the hood' it is, perhaps, not surprising that large and somewhat surprising thrust changes were evident with small throttle movements. I was initially over-cautious, especially with selecting reverse thrust while taxiing.

But my caution was unnecessary. With reassurance from Bucci I experimented, becoming gradually more confident. For example, I was able to select full reverse in one swift throttle movement, then return the throttle



SF-260 transported by C-27J for demonstration to potential customers.



SF-260 infra-red television camera.

to ground idle without any risk of engine over-temperature – essentially carefree engine handling on the ground.

Take-off was typical of the big turbo-props I have flown – rapid acceleration (12 seconds from brake release to rotation at 65kts), with moderately high rudder pedal force required to counter the engine torque. In fact, if I'd closed my eyes, I could almost have been in one of those larger, more expensive turbo props.

Control forces for rotation at 65 knots-indicated air speed (KIAS) were light, and acceleration to climb speed at 110kts was rapid. Retraction of gear and flap gave almost no change in trim forces (big trim changes can be a significant distraction to a pilot), and any out-of-trim forces could be quickly nulled using the stick-top 'witch's hat' for lateral and pitch trim.

The rudder trim switch, however, is not hands on throttle and stick (HOTAS) but is mounted just below the throttle. At first glance, the lack of HOTAS could be considered a deficiency but its position was easily located without looking down and it was also well tuned to allow easy, accurate rudder trimming.

I was keen to start the assessment but, as Bucci directed me to climb towards the Alps, which were bathed in sunshine and crested by beautiful white cumulus clouds, I allowed myself a brief

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moment to appreciate the view (endorsing my assessment of the excellent cockpit field of view)!

Incidentally, the SF-260 climbed quickly – just over three minutes from 2,000ft to 8,000ft at maximum continuous power. When training, there is often a need to get above a cloud layer to find clear air and a good horizon. Time spent climbing is largely wasted flight hours. The performance demonstrated by the 260 was excellent – a few minutes into the sortie and you would be ready to begin the lesson.

The aircraft exhibited light but positive apparent longitudinal static and manoeuvre stability – providing an excellent manoeuvring platform without the need for high control forces and little to no intrusive directional trim changes.

Qualitatively, it was a joy – a real pilot's aeroplane. The light forces and quick response gave the feeling that it was willing and responsive without resistance. Arguably, these stick forces were verging on being too light but my experience in manoeuvring the aircraft was that it was just right (in stark contrast to other big turbines I have flown – affectionately known as 'multi-gyms' due to the high control forces and consequent physical 'work-out' the pilot undergoes).

□□□□□

The controls were well tuned – with minimal friction and good centring. Harmony between pitch and roll axes could be slightly improved – in the roll axis forces were high, comparatively, to the pitch axis. But this should not be taken as a significant deficiency because the roll axis was, nevertheless, light and responsive compared to competing airframes.

Indeed, the roll response was one of the aircraft's significant enhancing features and there was little need to coordinate aileron inputs with rudder. At 160kts and 8,000ft, without rudder coordination, a full 360-degree roll was completed in three-and-a-half seconds – nice and fast. Even at elevated g, where roll performance often deteriorates, it took just five seconds for a 360-degree roll at 3g.

Lateral stability was light but positive, spiral stability in the cruise was neutral, and directional stability was moderate – all good features. Fine control of the pitch axis in dynamic tasks, such as attitude capture and g capture, exhibited a slightly slow short period mode, which seemed to be the cause of an occasional tendency to hunt a little in capture tasks. Overall, however, this was a lovely aircraft to manoeuvre.

Pulling up into a loop, I began to really enjoy this little beauty. The light pitch forces and responsive roll axis combined with a number of other enhancing features, such as the large bubble canopy and powerful engine, to make it not only easy to fly, but fun too.

For example, the small rudder trim changes with speed and power combined with excellent sideforce cues when out of trim to make life



Up-front control (top, centre) and two large multi-function displays – state of the art.

## Story of the SF-260

**The piston-engined Siai Marchetti SF-260 first flew in 1965 and has developed a strong pedigree.**

**First equipped with a (then Allison, now Rolls-Royce 250B) 350 HP turbo-prop in 1981, the powerful trainer remains available in both piston (Lycoming 540 series 260HP) and turbine variants.**

**It has been a massive success, selling more than 900 aircraft to over 27 military forces and a number of civilian flying schools and specialist aviation outfits. Many military units have re-ordered the same aircraft – a great endorsement of its effectiveness.**

**It's a flexible platform, too – boasting two wing pylons certified up to 300lbs carriage capacity on each side. External stores carriage brings the ultimate adaptability in facilitating anything from weapons through defensive aids to telemetry equipment.**

**Among civilian uses, the 'Macchi' is popular both with aerobatic teams and with companies offering air-to-air 'dogfight' experiences.**

really easy for the pilot in the directional axis. About a quarter rudder only was required over the top of the loop.

One of the best handling tasks to teach coordination in young pilots is the stall turn (or hammerhead manoeuvre), which the 260 executed nicely.

But where I really enjoyed myself was in flick rolls. From around 110kts a sharp aft stick input to the edge of the stall was followed by a half rudder input and bingo – the aircraft flick-rolled rapidly (around two seconds for the 360 roll) with a slight forward stick input to accelerate the roll rate.

The greatest skill in flick manoeuvres is being able to stop this rapid roll precisely and, after two practices, I was able to end it crisply with about a half opposite rudder application.

The nice thing about this kind of capability is the ability to stretch the more able students with demanding handling tasks in a benign, safe environment. Too often we pass students out of training without sufficiently developing their raw handling skills and the benefits of an aircraft that allows you to do this should not be underestimated.

After exhausting Bucci's patience with my flick rolls (great to fly, horrible to sit through) I moved on!

Stall and spin characteristics are important for two reasons. Firstly, it is vital for an inexperienced pilot to be able to avoid inadvertent stalls and spins but also to be able to recover from them should they occur.

Secondly, training aircraft must be able to be deliberately stalled and spun in order to give the young pilot experience.

The SF-260 excels in both areas.

Approaching the stall clean at 8,000ft, with the engine at idle and a 1kt per second deceleration rate, I got excellent stall warning with a loud and unmistakable audio tone at 82kts.

Aerodynamic buffet began at 79kts and increased progressively in intensity to 73kts, at which point stall occurred with a benign 'pitch break' (drop in pitch attitude). Holding the aircraft in the stall with approximately one-third to one-half aft stick, I was pleasantly surprised to find the ailerons still responsive in the conventional sense, with no apparent tendency for the aircraft to depart and spin.

A slight two-and-a-half centimetre push on the stick to neutral was required to un-stall the



The cockpit – small on the outside, big on the inside.

wings and recovery from the dive was easy with no apparent tendency to re-stall.

In the landing configuration, most relevant to the safety of an inexperienced student pilot, stall characteristics were similar, with good warning and a stall at 62 KIAS.

Entirely satisfied with the SF-260's stall characteristics, it was time to spin.

Spinning is potentially hazardous. Spinning performed (either deliberately or inadvertently) by student pilots is more hazardous still. Controls can be mishandled for a variety of reasons, so an aircraft that will recover from a mishandled spin with mishandled recovery controls is a tall order, but extremely desirable.

I elected to both mishandle the controls during the spin and mishandle the recovery. That Bucci was content to let me do this was an indication of his confidence in the aircraft... and in me.

Entering the spin with full aft stick and full left rudder at 75kts with the engine at idle, the 260 exhibited classic motion. A moderate rate, rolling entry settled after a turn into a moderate rate, 45-degree nose down, non-oscillatory spin at a rate of just less than four seconds per turn. So far, so good.

After one-and-a-half turns I sharply input full out-spin aileron, to simulate mishandling in the spin. Theory would tell you that the spin would become more oscillatory – and indeed it did. However, after the planned three turns (total) I used a centralise-controls recovery technique.

Now, the standard spin recovery was to use full opposite rudder, so in looking at a centralise recovery I was again evaluating possible mishandling – this time, a mishandled recovery.

After two turns the aircraft yaw and roll rates noticeably reduced and though at this point, as we had briefed, a small opposite rudder input

was made, the aircraft was certainly recovering with centralised controls.

I repeated the spin, this time using full in-spin aileron, which smoothed and stabilised the spin (in accordance with theory). Centralised controls after three turns (total) this time recovered the aircraft in just three-quarters of a turn.

Overall the spinning had been extremely encouraging. Not only were the motions benign (neither too fast nor too oscillatory and, therefore, not disorientating) but the 260 exhibited reliable recovery characteristics (at least as far as I was able to test) even with centralised controls.



So overall, an excellent spin trainer – as good as I've seen anywhere.

As with many aspects of flight training, there are two demands on the aircraft – it must be safe for the inexperienced pilot and have a good set of characteristics for training.

Both visual and instrument flying are relevant so I went 'heads in' to evaluate use of the primary flight display on the large, Avidyne multi-function screens. I performed a variety of representative instrument tasks – speed capture in the dive, heading capture in turns, and pitch attitude capture. The primary flight display was clear and readable in the bright conditions and was easy to use.

I then elected to configure with gear and flap a little early, to have a look at the handling qualities in the landing configuration, before reaching the landing pattern.

Turbulence at lower level (we were approaching the airfield by now) meant that it was difficult to get a clear picture of some of the characteristics I had more carefully evaluated in

cruise configuration, but there were no surprises. Aside from what would be expected at the lower airspeed and altitude, the SF-260 was essentially the same aircraft at 100kts with gear and flap deployed as it was at 160kts in the cruise.

And so we progressed to the visual circuit on runway 36 at Venegono. Wind was light and variable at less than 5kts from the west.

Maintaining speed and altitude downwind, the throttle felt sensitive for small movements, again unsurprising given the beast of an engine. But this sensitivity was mitigated by excellent cues from the engine noise – not always the case with fixed-rpm turboprop engines. Overall, I had no trouble controlling the engine and setting airspeed downwind.

Flight around finals at 95kts was comfortable, with good view over the nose and predictable, comfortable handling qualities.

The most critical part of approach and landing as regards pitch handling qualities is the flare. Student pilots frequently face challenges learning to flare and land. They can get too tightly 'in-the-loop' and set off pilot-induced oscillations (PIO) or simply find themselves unable to control the flight-path accurately. Hard landings and/or students washed out of training are all too often the result – both are extremely expensive.



It was great to find the SF-260 was benign in the flare. Crossing the threshold with 85kts there was little or no apparent loss of lift (sink) as the throttle was closed, and I could detect no tendency for PIO, even when I attempted very tight in-the-loop control, flaring to touch down between 65 and 70kts.

Once on the runway, powering up for the touch-and-go was also straight forward, requiring a large right rudder input as the power bit, typical of turbine-powered singles.

After two such touch-and-goes I reluctantly lined up for my final full stop landing. Use of reverse thrust on the ground was simple and carefree and our landing roll-out was less than 500 metres.

Taxiing in, I reflected that the quantitative measurements I had taken had given no surprises but, more importantly, that I had found the SF-260 a positive joy to fly.

It wasn't till I got out on the wing after shutdown, however, and noted just over 70 kilos of fuel used in 1:15, that I remembered that this aircraft is both small and comparatively cheap.

It is an excellent training platform, an excellent operational platform for light turbo-prop roles and overall, clearly, it is a lot bigger in its capabilities than in cost and size.

Now, that's like getting your cake and eating it!

For a more detailed review of the aircraft and the flight test go to [www.africanaerospace.africa/features](http://www.africanaerospace.africa/features)



# Needed: a mandate of many parts...

**A**irports, airlines and MROs are consistently looking to better understand how to effectively and cost-efficiently execute line maintenance and spare parts allocation to avoid aircraft on ground (AOG) situations – particularly at airports that have challenging or unique needs.

In terms of line maintenance, for instance, a number of international players have slowly homed in on the growing African market.

MCM Maintenance Centre Malta (M.C.M) has been approved by the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) to provide line maintenance services at its Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos facility for Nigerian-registered aircraft.

Alexander Vit, managing director of M.C.M, said the facility would offer maintenance solutions in West Africa, which would meet the safety standards of EASA regulations, thereby creating a benchmark for high-quality maintenance standards in Africa while putting confidence into the consumer's mind.



Of course, other larger players have been conducting line maintenance at African airports for a lot longer. British Airways Engineering has line maintenance stations at a number of locations in Africa. "In Nigeria we have two stations," declared Mike Isaacs, area maintenance manager, Africa. "The first, in the capital Lagos, handles both British Airways and customer airlines. In fact, it is our busiest station for customer work in Africa, with around 85%

*Demand for line maintenance and spare parts provision at various African airports is set to increase as aircraft traffic grows, but only the well-prepared will reap benefits from what is becoming a booming business.*

**Keith Mwanalushi reports.**

carried out for other operators. We have recently recruited engineers in Nigeria and hope to grow both our own and our third-party work.

"The second is in Abuja. This is also run by British Airways' engineers, and we hope to offer our services to customer airlines in the near future."

The east African market continues to be a major growth area on the continent as a number of European, Middle East and Asian carriers continue their onslaught into the region. In Uganda, BA Engineering has a station in Entebbe. "This market has seen a great deal of growth recently. We handle British Airways' flights as well as customer airlines, including Qatar Airways and South African Airways," said Isaacs. "We hope to recruit more engineers and customers, over time."

In Nairobi, Isaacs said the company had recently doubled its capacity, and added additional aircraft capability for the Airbus A320. "In both Lusaka and Cairo our engineers handle British Airways flights only, but we see opportunities for growth in Cairo," he added.

In Accra, Angola, Johannesburg, Cape Town,

Tripoli, Freetown, Agadir, Mauritius, Algiers, Marrakech and Tunisia, BA Engineering employs agencies to carry out line maintenance.

Dutch-based line maintenance provider Direct Maintenance has steadily increased its footprint in Africa. In June this year, the company started providing dedicated line maintenance services to Air Arabia in support of its busy A320 operation at Nairobi. In order to accommodate this new customer, Direct Maintenance was required to further expand its UAE GCAA CAR-145 approval to cover the A320.

Roger Meels, technical director and accountable manager at Direct Maintenance, said the company approached the world's airlines some years ago to find out where they required support in terms of line maintenance.



"By surprise, quite a few were in need of professional support in east Africa," he explained. "We started out in Mombasa, Kenya, in 2006, just handling a few flights a week. Over the years we have continued to invest in creating local jobs as well as offering aircraft type training to expand our capabilities, allowing us to take on more work gradually."

Direct Maintenance also launched in Zanzibar in early 2007 and then Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2009. It now includes expansion into three more east African locations.

Adequate infrastructure at some African airports can often be lacking and, therefore, the ability to provide internationally accredited line maintenance services, where such challenges exist, is crucial. In Lusaka, for example, Direct Maintenance had to bring in all required tooling and equipment in line with the EASA Part-145 regulations, some of which was calibrated at set intervals. In addition, it had to audit and certify the station to satisfy the Dutch CAA, as well as the United Arab Emirates GCAA in order to service Emirates' Dubai-Lusaka operation.



Direct Maintenance now provides full line services for Emirates A330 flights at Lusaka.

PICTURE: DIRECT MAINTENANCE



**International line maintenance providers are expanding across Africa.**

PICTURE: SWISSPORT

BA Engineering says all its engineers are trained at the British Airways training facility in the UK. "Our organisation is fully EASA Part 145 and Part 147 approved, which is consistent with the highest industry standards. We also supply all the tooling and equipment required at each station to support our operation," Isaacs confirmed.

Some believe finding skilled labour is another common problem in Africa but Isaacs argued he had seen changes in this respect. "Fifteen years ago we had very few locally employed engineers in Africa but today all our engineers at each location are local nationals. We have expanded our workforce in Africa by nearly 100% in the last three years and all our staff have gone through the BA Engineering training programme."

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 95

Isaacs added that BA Engineering has had considerable success through investment in the recruitment, training and development of local mechanics. “We plan to continue to recruit and develop local staff. We are currently recruiting mechanics and investing in them through our extensive training programmes, which allow them to progress to become licensed aircraft engineers.”

Meels, on the other hand, recalled that when Direct Maintenance initially set up its Lusaka station it did not manage to source Zambian nationals who held Airbus A330 approvals. So, for some time, the company settled with having a mixed team on site, with non-Zambian licensed staff and local mechanics.

AJW Aviation, the aircraft spares support specialist, has broadened its bursary offer to students worldwide.

AJW recently awarded Jared Ochieng’ Ajwanga, a duty control engineer for line maintenance at Kenya Airways, a bursary to assist with fees for his MSc aircraft maintenance management degree course in conjunction with City University, London.

Boris Wolstenholme, CEO of AJW, said: “This is our sixth year supporting the MSc aircraft maintenance management degree and the qualification will be extremely beneficial to Jared’s career. The bursary demonstrates AJW’s commitment to the training and development of aviation professionals and the excellent response this year compounds our decision to continue supporting the course and the university.

“So often, engineers are the unsung heroes behind efficient and profitable airlines, so it gives us enormous pleasure to reward exceptional individuals in the field of aviation maintenance and engineering.”

Another issue that sometimes crops up is that aircraft component manufacturers may often

not have in-country sales or representation at most African locations and this may inevitably lead to costly AOG situations.

Isaacs said British Airways is one of the founding members of the International Airlines Technical Pool and, in order to respond to the need for emergency replacement spares and to reduce operational costs, airlines can, through this scheme, loan each other EASA-approved spare parts.

“We strategically hold significant spares at our overseas locations around the globe. We loan spares to other airlines and we borrow spares from other airlines. In extreme cases we can ship spares from London on an AOG (urgent) shipment priority,” he noted.

“Sometimes, in order to avoid any hassle with regard to spare parts, OEMs or MROs recommend airlines to view matters from the operational side only,” added Paulius Kavaliauskas, head of business development at FL Technics.

“This, however, does not guarantee the most efficient solution or reasonable investment. From FL Technics’ side, we carry out meticulous cross-checking procedures before presenting our customers with any recommendations designed to lower costs while maintaining the same risk of AOG situations.

“There is a lot of surplus on the market, so consistently good results can be relatively easily achieved with much lower investment than those usually recommended by other service providers.”



Kavaliauskas added that an operator does not need ‘some parts’ at a designated location. “Instead, clients are in need of solutions designed to help them avoid delays in operations. For MRO and other services providers, the core target is to carry out their obligations in time and be flexible enough to adapt to the changing global environment.”

According to an analysis by FL Technics, inventory ownership transfer ratio depends on the size of an airline and the level of its activity. “For start-ups and small operators (up to 10-15 aircraft) there are no advantages in keeping their own stock at all because of the extended fixed costs arising from warehouse management and the weighty investments needed to obtain spare parts in comparison to the revenue generated by aircraft. In this case all logistics, warehouse and spare parts management should be outsourced,” Kavaliauskas recommended.

On the other hand, he said mid-size operators (about 15-50 aircraft) should keep their stock on site, as usually there were some maintenance operations performed directly by the airline’s personnel.

“The logistics activity should be organised in the way that it could be relatively easy to secure operations and divide risks, because different logistics strategies enables airlines to distribute logistics efforts on different scales,” Kavaliauskas concluded.

**“Clients are in need of solutions designed to help them avoid delays in operations.”**  
PAULIUS  
KAVALIAUSKAS





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THE NEW SPIRIT OF AFRICA



*Flight Safety Foundation CEO Kevin Hyatt tells Kelly Green how the organisation can help operators in Africa improve flight safety.*

Since 1947, the Flight Safety Foundation has helped to save lives around the world by providing impartial, independent, expert safety guidance and resources for the aviation and aerospace community.

“Flight Safety Foundation has been on the aviation scene for some time now,” explained Captain Kevin Hyatt, president and CEO of the international non-profit organisation.

“Our main mission is to reduce the risk in aviation. We facilitate a lot of different programmes that help reduce risk and make flying safer for passengers.”

Naturally, safety in aviation has drastically improved in the years since the organisation.

“Flying is very safe but as we move the foundation into the next generation of safety, there is still much more to do,” said Hyatt. “There is now some fantastic technology but we’ve got to make sure we don’t become complacent.”

The organisation is based in Virginia, USA and its membership includes more than 1,000 organisations and individuals in some 150 countries.

It also has a regional office in Melbourne, Australia, from which its onshore resource industry basic aviation guideline (BARS) project is conducted.



BARS provides an industry standard to organisations that offer services to the onshore resource industry. “This is a programme that’s geared towards the operators that work within the mineral and mining industry,” explained Hyatt. “It made sense to start it in Australia because of the minerals and the resources that are there but then we’ve also moved over towards Africa, India, and up towards Canada, as well as a little bit in South America.”

Africa and Canada, in particular, are the two major areas.

“The aim of the audit programme is to keep the passengers on aircraft and helicopters safe as they transit to and from the mineral and mining sites, and so the Flight Safety Foundation has been working in mineral-rich areas of Africa, such as Mozambique, Lagos, the Congo and Sudan,” said Hyatt.

“Smaller carriers aren’t audited as much as the

# How to help Africa move into the next generation of safety

major air carriers but this programme makes sure that smaller operators are working to the highest standards and reducing the amount of risk to passengers.”

He added that the number of audits in Africa is increasing. “In Africa right now we have one major auditor and out of that Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton are our main clients there.

“The trend among African operators seems to be making sure that aircraft are maintained properly and also that you have the right pilots that are certified and remain certified to fly the aircraft. It’s a challenge among smaller operators in Africa, because of cost,” he said.

The Flight Safety Foundation is hoping that it can help improve air safety across the whole of the African continent, because currently there is a higher risk there than in the US and Europe.

“We want to help Africa work with their infrastructure and their training,” said Hyatt. “Africa needs an improvement in its infrastructure, it needs help in the form of training and expertise,

and it needs money. Where Flight Safety Foundation can really make a big difference is in helping to highlight where some of the more critical areas are and maybe pinpoint some training and some expertise into those areas to help mitigate problems.”

Hyatt is positive that the safety of air travel in Africa will continue to improve. “I think we will see a measured gradual improvement in Africa as more commercialism comes in,” he said.

One African operator working hard to maintain high safety standards is National Airways Corporation (NAC), based at Lanseria, South Africa. It became the first aircraft operator in the world to achieve gold registration status under the BARS programme in May 2013. Gold status is issued to aircraft operators, which maintain continuous registration for three consecutive years and close out any findings in a timely manner.

“We are absolutely thrilled to have been the first operator to achieve the gold status. Our excellent team of people at NAC has worked extremely hard to meet and exceed the most exacting safety standards demanded by our customers across our operations,” said NAC CEO Martin Banner.

“Attaining the coveted gold registration status is a significant achievement,” added BARS managing director, Greg Marshall. “But to be the first in the world to do so is historic.”

Worldwide, Hyatt said that the future risk in aviation is going to be complacency. “We’ve got aircraft and technology that have really taken a lot of the risk and accidents out of aviation itself, so we’re looking at becoming very used to the same thing happening every day just like it’s supposed to and not being aware of, or not spotting, the inherent risk that might arise.

“The other area would be the training that goes into the pilots and the technicians with the modern aircraft that have advanced cockpits, to make sure that the pilot actually understands and stays current with what the aircraft is doing as opposed to being just a systems monitor.

“What we really need is to make sure that the pilot is thinking along with the aircraft and not riding along with it.”

**“I think we will see a measured gradual improvement in Africa as more commercialism comes in.”**

## SOMMAIRE

## Poser les bases de la sécurité aérienne

*Kevin Hyatt, PDG de la Flight Safety Foundation, nous explique comment son organisation peut aider les opérateurs africains à améliorer la sécurité de leurs vols.*

*Une enquête de Kelly Green.*

Depuis 1947, la Fondation pour la sécurité aérienne prodigue des conseils sur la sécurité aux acteurs du transport aérien. Basée en Virginie aux Etats-Unis, elle compte parmi ses membres plus de 1 000 organisations et individus dans 150 pays.

« Notre principale mission est de réduire le risque dans le transport aérien et rendre les vols plus sûrs pour les passagers », affirme le capitaine Kevin Hyatt. « La sécurité a considérablement évolué au cours des dernières années mais il reste beaucoup à faire en Afrique. »

La Fondation développe un programme appelé BARS (Basic Aviation Risk Standard) apportant des référents aux organismes qui proposent des services et des ressources à l'industrie « onshore ».

« Ce programme est davantage orienté vers les opérateurs qui travaillent pour les industries minières et des minéraux », précise Kevin Hyatt. « Il a démarré en Australie et nous l'avons également développé pour l'Afrique, l'Inde, le Canada et l'Amérique du Sud. »

L'objectif du programme est de vérifier et de préserver la sécurité des passagers à bord d'avions et d'hélicoptères depuis les sites miniers comme au Mozambique, au Congo, au Soudan et à Lagos. Il permet aux petits exploitants de minimiser les risques d'opération.

« La tendance actuelle est de s'assurer à ce que les avions des opérateurs africains soient correctement entretenus et que les pilotes soient certifiés pour voler sur le bon type d'avions. Cela reste un défi notamment en raison des coûts. »

La Fondation souhaite non seulement apporter son expertise en matière de sécurité mais également au niveau de la formation et de l'amélioration des infrastructures.

L'opérateur sud-africain Airways National Corporation s'est beaucoup investi et est devenu le premier exploitant au monde à obtenir un statut d'excellence (or) en mai 2013 dans le cadre du programme BARS.

L'un des principaux risques à l'avenir serait d'être « complaisant », selon Kevin Hyatt. Il y a des avions et des technologies qui comportent encore des risques potentiels d'accidents et nous cherchons à les repérer et à éviter qu'ils ne se reproduisent. Un défi majeur sera ainsi de former les pilotes et les techniciens sur des avions modernes et veiller à ce qu'ils maîtrisent et mettent en pratique les nouvelles technologies.

**“We want to help Africa work with their infrastructure and their training, Africa needs an improvement in its infrastructure, it needs help in the form of training and expertise, and it needs money.”**

**KEVIN HYATT**



The Ugandan State  
Minister for Works,  
Stephen Chebrot.



# Africa en route

*It was clear from the passionate, and sometimes humorous, debate at this year's two-day Routes Africa strategy summit in Uganda that attitudes towards aviation are beginning to change. **African Aerospace** was at the Speke Resort Hotel, near Kampala, to record the outcome.*

It may have taken a little longer than many anticipated but the sleeping giant is awakening and now, more than ever before, the message is clear... airlines, airports, tourism authorities and other stakeholders need to link up and lobby governments to allow aviation to become one of the drivers of enhanced connectivity into, out of, and across the continent, generating economic growth in the process.

An address from Maria Mutagamba, Uganda's minister of tourism, wildlife and antiquities, embodied the new optimism and deserved its round of applause from the audience of senior aviation executives, tourism experts and other government officials.

Mutagamba made renewed calls for a single visa to be introduced across all of east Africa to ease access for foreign visitors between countries

in the area. This would be a major fillip for Uganda, which has, perhaps, not developed as a destination as quickly as some of its neighbours.

Despite being blessed with immense tourism potential, Uganda lags a long way behind the likes of Kenya in terms of visitor numbers. "So many tourists are visiting Kenya but they do not come to Uganda. But if they do not need another visa [to come to Uganda], they will visit us too. In the end, we shall all benefit," said Mutagamba.

It is clear that aviation and tourism play an important role in economies across Africa but this is only going to grow if governments wake up to the potential of these sectors. It was highlighted during the summit that for every three tourists that visit Africa, one job is created across the continent. The annual tourism growth across the world is just 4% but there were around 1.3 million



With more than 350 delegates in attendance this was the largest Routes Africa yet. Top: Dr Rama Makuza (centre) head of Uganda’s CAA at the opening session calls for more investment in air transport to aid tourism growth, watched by Maria Mutagamba the Ugandan tourism minister. Right: Winners: One key part of the event was the Routes Awards. Pictured here are Nigel Mayes, VP commercial of organiser UBM Routes; Christine Mwakatobe, business development manager and Bakari Murusuri, acting managing director, both of Kilimanjaro Airports Development Company (KADCO); Jane Risby-Rose, Global EVP, UBM Events.

# to cooperation

tourist arrivals in Africa in 2012, up 21.6% on the previous year.

Stephen Chebrot, Ugandan state minister for works, made an analogy between birds flying south to mate and calls for increasing tourist arrivals into Uganda. Aside from the obvious humour, this was a serious point as, when people considered locations for safaris and exploring Africa, they tended to focus on Kenya and South Africa, yet Uganda is actually home to 10% of the world’s animal species.

Dr W Rama Makuza, managing director of the Uganda Civil Aviation Authority, pointed out that, as the country is land-locked, it must rely on aviation to support its development. “We are very, very dependent on air transport,” he said.

It is not only about getting visitors into the country but also moving them around when they arrive.

According to Mutagamba, it is essential that enhanced domestic access means the country can truly show off its assets to visitors. “We not only need more airlines, we also need airports. Few of our visitors are urban tourists. The majority of them are eco-tourists, yet it takes six hours to drive from Kampala to Bwindi [impenetrable forest] or Kidepo [national park]. We really need to work to move tourists on from Entebbe more efficiently,” she said.

This is a project that is now under ministerial discussion, according to Chebrot, and a new aviation masterplan is being developed to prepare for demand growth. This will include significant investments in infrastructure at Entebbe, as well as upgrades at domestic airports across Uganda.

Infrastructure is obviously one of the factors airlines consider when they are making plans for

network growth. For example, poor ground infrastructure can affect arrival levels due to the poor customer experience.

Dr Titus Naikuni, Kenya Airways CEO, highlighted this as a major factor in his own airline’s decision-making process.

“Apart from Johannesburg on this continent, the first thing that hits you when you leave an African airport is a very long traffic jam. If you do not sort out traffic jams, you will not get visitors,” he said, adding that Africa also needed to increase safety and security standards to attract more airline partners.

Naikuni also commented on the increasing investment from China in Africa, with his view that it was the “best thing to happen and worst thing to happen” to the continent.

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But, it is happening and is an investment that is vital to the development of the Africa region, he added.

However, Naikuni noted that airports across Africa have been slow to respond and little or no signage is offered to visitors from this part of the world. “How can you expect people to come in from China when you can’t actually offer them directions of where to go,” he said.

He pointed out that governments needed to ensure that local African communities benefitted from the legacy of the Chinese.

A distinguished panel of senior airline officials debated the rise of low-cost airlines and the impact of strong flag-carriers.

One issue that united the carriers, whether they were regional or low-cost businesses, was airport taxation in west Africa. “How can we even consider offering low fares in west Africa when \$30 is not even enough to cover the airport tax,” said Sergio Rosa, alliance director of the Celestair Group, which covers Air Burkina, Air Mali and Air Uganda.



Richard Bodin, chief commercial officer, FastJet revealed that these high taxes served no real economic benefit to the countries involved.

“We recently completed a study for a west African government exploring what effect a reduction to a \$10 tax rate from the then \$60 level would have on demand,” he explained. “We found that it would have stimulated demand to a level where other fuel and passenger taxes would have exceeded its actual current income by 400%.

According to Abderahmane Berthe, CEO, Air Mali, it is difficult for many airlines across Africa to become low-fare operators. “Traffic is low so airlines need to use 50- to 100-seater aircraft, which means costs per seat are higher and, therefore, it is difficult to offer low fares,” he said. This was a view shared by Rosa, who explained that across the Celestair Group many routes were served “not for economical advantage but to maintain vital air links”. However, he believed there remained a good niche for regional players, providing they reshaped their business and developed partnerships with larger carriers.

## Ugandan CAA calls for continent to unite

**The head of the Ugandan Civil Aviation Authority took the opportunity to push aviation officials to help bring about a ‘united Africa’ to enable air transport to grow to its full potential.**

**In his address, Dr Rama Makuza reinforced the need for enhanced connectivity and cooperation within the continent.**

**Part of the reason for Africa’s under-served status is that many African countries restrict their air services markets to protect the share held by state-owned air carriers. This practice originated in the early 1960s, when many newly-independent African states created national airlines, in part, to assert their status as nations.**

**Now, however, most have recognised that the strict regulatory protection that sustains such carriers has detrimental effects of air safety records, while also inflating airfares and dampening air traffic growth. It has actually led to the collapse of a number of flag-carriers.**

**“The Yamoussoukro Decision, made in the 1990s, has yet to make any progress and is taking far too long,” explained Makuza, calling on delegates to lobby governments across Africa to push forward the process.**

What is clear is that the low-cost model has to be reshaped from that which was successful in Europe and America if it is to succeed in Africa. “There are no secondary airports in Africa,” said Rosa.

“The continent gets up at 6am and shuts its doors at 10pm, so it will be difficult to get good utilisation,” highlighted, Inati Ntshanga, chief executive officer, SA Express Airways.

Bodin’s own definition of a low-cost carrier is “an airline that grows the market” and that does not necessarily just relate to passenger traffic but also infrastructure.

“Africa has a great history of airlines that have failed,” he said. “We are already showing that our model can be sustainable in the continent.”

According to Bodin, its Tanzanian budget venture has already carried 200,000 passengers since its November 2012 launch, 30,000 of which have been at its lowest one-way fare of around \$20. A remarkable statistic is that 38% of the total passengers had never actually flown before, said Bodin.

For Ntshanga, the solution for Africa is clear. “We need to open our skies,” he said, a view clearly echoed by Bodin, who added: “Deregulation needs to happen faster than it is today. During our short operation we have already seen barriers being put up against new starters and, although the primary function of governments is to look after their population, I feel competition would be the better option for them.”

There are certainly opportunities for development across the continent. An analysis from Bombardier Aerospace showed that only 15% of routes in Africa are served double daily. This compares with 58% in North America.

“There is huge room for growth,” said Charles Carriere, airline marketing manager, African region, claiming Bombardier had identified 254 routes within the continent that could be profitably operated with its Dash 8-Q400 turboprop.



According to Doreen Owusu-Fianko, managing director, Ghana Airports Company, stability and safety are the two leading drivers of tourism across the continent and it is only then that access becomes an issue – and after that how affordable it would be to travel. “Governments need to ensure a commitment to aviation and tourism to make it work,” she added.

Cornwell Muleya, chief executive officer, Air Uganda, highlighted that new media platforms needed to be embraced by airlines as they were “changing the dynamic” of the business. Carriers needed to be aware of the importance of good customer service and investment in marketing to share what they were looking to achieve, he said.

However, it was Hassim Pondor, area manager, eastern Africa, IATA, who summed things up well and provided an excellent quote to end this review: “China in the 1980s and 1990s was like Africa is now – now look at it! Remember that just 20 years ago the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was little more than a desert. Others have been able to make this happen. We have the strategic location and a market to be as, or even more, successful if we can move aside the barriers that have held us back for so long.”



## Stunning display from the Texas Twister

**Routes Africa opened with a stunning aerobatic display over Lake Victoria. Captain Howard Davenport performed a special 15-minute demonstration of his flying skills in his own Super Chipmunk.**

**Davenport, also known as ‘The Texas Twister’, has been flying since the age of 16 and has more than 40 years’ experience with a range of aviation professions from pipeline patrol, prisoner transport, bush pilot and pilot examiner, to name but a few.**

**The spectacle included many stunts, including his trademark inverted ribbon cut over Lake Victoria.**

**Davenport is the first – and currently only – pilot in east Africa to hold authorisation from the Uganda CAA to perform aerobatics from the surface up. He is the first ever pilot to perform the inverted ribbon cut over open water on the African continent.**



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# Africa's Biggest Airline CEOs' Conference

The African Airlines Association (AFRAA) will hold its 45th Annual General Assembly (AGA) and African Air Transport Summit at the Leisure Lodge, South Coast, Mombasa – Kenya, from 24-26 November 2013. The Kenya Airways hosted AGA will be convened under the theme:  
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## Ian Bell

**Marcella Nethersole**

*talks to the vice president and regional business leader of CAE Europe & Africa – Military.*



1

■ What is your aviation background?

Having joined the Royal Air Force as a direct entrant officer cadet, I graduated from Henlow in December 1979. Pilot training followed and my first operational tour was on the Wessex helicopter as a search and rescue pilot on C Flight 22 Squadron at RAF Valley. Operational and instructional tours followed on Wessex, Gazelle, Chinook and Puma helicopters. In 1990 I was fortunate to fly the MH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter with the United States Air Force on exchange in New Mexico. Several MoD staff tours culminated in command of RAF Aldergrove before retirement saw me join CAE in 2007.

2

■ What does a typical day entail for you?

I split my 'working week' between offices in the UK and Germany, so the day is just as likely to start with an early morning flight in or out of Heathrow.

I am usually in the office by 8.15am, which enables me to catch up on any overnight e-mail traffic before matters of the day begin in earnest around 9:00am.

Often there will be European-specific business to work through in the morning and perhaps a hook-up with Australia on joint programmes. The afternoon continues much the same and, most likely, will involve calls or videoconferences with the head office in Montreal.

I will often be visiting customers, suppliers, or partners at some point during the week.

3

■ What are the biggest challenges in your role?

Having enough time to be in the right place at the right time! I am very fortunate to have a strong management team, which is my support network. Each individual business (P&L) has a very experienced GM who takes care of the day-to-day running of the business unit. Of course, my job would be challenging in the extreme were it not for my very able executive assistant!

4

■ What are the key differences between training for civil and military?

I would summarise the key difference between civil and military as being one of regulation and mission training. Civil aviation training is very well regulated and standardised across the globe, where CAE excels and leads with training more than 100,000 aircrew professionals annually. By contrast, a lot of military training is nation specific and can be rather bespoke. Also, military training often involves very specific and tactical mission training, such as aerial refuelling, troop transport, or weapons engagement. This kind of mission training adds complexity to the simulation environment. That said, the overriding principles are common and CAE provides military training services to more than 35 nations' military forces globally.

5

■ What simulators do you have?

CAE has provided its simulation products and comprehensive training services to more than 50 national defence forces in over 35 countries. We are the world leader in providing simulation-based training solutions for transport aircraft such as the C-130J, tankers such as the A330 multi-role tanker transport, helicopters such as the Lynx and Chinook, and direct and indirect fire weapons simulation. We have a wide range of simulation and training solutions for fast jet aircraft, such as the BAE Systems Hawk and the Aermacchi M346. CAE Mining and CAE Healthcare also have a wide range of training media tailored to mining and healthcare domains.

6

■ What training do you offer in Africa?

Africa is a market that is beginning to offer a range of opportunities for CAE's comprehensive portfolio of simulation-based products and services. On the military side of our business, we have several pursuits on-going in different regions of Africa, but it is too early to publicly disclose these. However, we offer A330 simulator training to South African Airways and other operators on a CAE-built and owned simulator located at the CAE Oxford Aviation Academy operates an ab initio flight academy in Cameroon and CAE Mining has business operations in Johannesburg.



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