



AFRICAN AEROSPACE

THE MAGAZINE FOR AEROSPACE PROFESSIONALS IN AFRICA

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Answers to the problems on Africa's doorstep

While other markets are maturing, the future for African aviation is just being created. That was the view of Tony Tyler the CEO of IATA, the umbrella group for the global airline industry, when he made the keynote address at the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) general assembly held in Diani, 50km south of Mombasa.

Delegates arriving at the beautiful beach resort on Kenya's south coast all told horror stories about the transport difficulties of getting from their own bases to the venue.

Even near neighbours have a torturous route to follow.

At the conference, airlines and AFRAA took their usual stance and grumbled about the unfair playing fields and the challenges of competition – especially from the Arabian Gulf airlines.

This is a familiar complaint. But AFRAA – and its member airlines – needs to be doing much more closer to home. There needs to be greater engagement with governments to work on changing outdated bilateral systems; there also needs to be the courage to say, 'We are not afraid of competition' and to stop using those government relationships to prevent competitors from entering the market.

Greater competition leads to an improvement in quality... and that is what the passenger buys.

But quality, commitment to customer service, and a knowledge of aviation and what is required is also part



of a culture. Africa, in general, lacks that broad passion or knowledge for the industry. There are still many clinging to the old seat-of-the-pants flying with little regard for the systems or procedures that have seen the global industry improve operational performance and safety. Also, aviation is rarely seen as a prospective career for young people.

The host nation for the AFRAA conference IS doing something.

I was privileged to be flying to Diani with Safarilink (and had probably the easiest journey of any of the delegates) and witnessed the scenes at Wilson Airport in Nairobi, where streams of schoolchildren were getting their first experience of airport operations as they were taken to look at aircraft, watch them land and take-off and see the hangars where maintenance was being carried out. Resident operator there, Phoenix Aviation, had recently flown youngsters from a nearby children's home, giving many their first ever experience of air travel.

The raising of awareness not only opens eyes of young Africans to opportunities in aviation – it can also lead to a wish to travel.

And that is the reason why the growth potential is so great.

Africa's air transport future lies within its own hands. Safe landings,

Alan Peaford
Editor-in-Chief

COVER: Egypt's civil aviation minister, Abdel Aziz Fadel. Picture: Billypix

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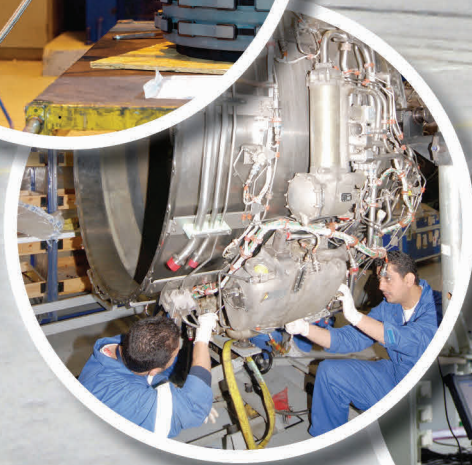




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Ghana Air Expo

The first African Air Expo 2014 is to be held at the Kotoka International Airport in Accra, Ghana, from October 9-11.

Under the patronage of the president of Ghana, John Dramani Mahama, and the minister of Transport, Dzifa Aku Ativor, event organiser Adone Events is aiming to attract a mix of 150 general, business and commercial aviation exhibitors and a static area of 50,000sqm, which will accommodate more than 100 aircraft ranging in size from single and twin-engine models, turbo props, and executive jets through to commercial wide-body aircraft.

Running in parallel with the exhibition will be a conference arranged by the International Centre of Excellence (ICE), a UAE-based aviation training and conference specialist.

Iraq train set

EgyptAir Training Center has been approved by the Iraqi Civil Aviation Authority to provide all the required aviation-training courses for Iraqi Airways teams.

The approval covers courses for cabin crews, pilots and maintenance



Tracey retraces epic journey

Pilot Tracey Curtis-Taylor has completed her 7,000-mile (11,000km) solo journey in a reconditioned Boeing Stearman open-cockpit biplane, retracing Lady Mary Heath's historic 1928 flight between South Africa and the United Kingdom. Heath was the first pilot, male or female, to make such a journey.

Curtis-Taylor, a UK-based pilot, departed Cape Town on November 2 with plans to land in Goodwood, near London, in December. After weather-related delays she was in Croatia for Christmas and entering northern Europe as we went to press.

engineers.

The centre's advanced fleet of simulators includes a B777/B737/A320/A330/ and an A340 in addition to the training devices for cabin crew training, such as CST & CEET.

Biofuel 'first'

Boeing and South African Airways (SAA) are working together to develop and implement a sustainable aviation biofuel supply chain in Southern Africa, a first for the continent.

"South African Airways is taking the lead in Africa on sustainable aviation fuels and, by setting a best practice example, can positively shape aviation biofuel efforts in the

region," said Ian Cruickshank, SAA head of group environmental affairs.

"By working with Boeing's sustainable aviation biofuel team, we will apply the best global technology to meet the unique conditions of southern Africa, diversify our energy sources and create new opportunities for the people of South Africa."

Sabena going spare

Mauritania Airlines has signed a five-year integrated services contract with Sabena Technics for spare parts for its fleet of Boeing B737 aircraft.

Sabena will provide the

airline with unlimited pool access to B737 CG & NG components, repair & overhaul services, engineering & maintenance, as well as a dedicated main base kit to ensure the continuity of the flight operations, anywhere in the world.

Air Mauritius deal

Air Mauritius has signed an enhanced commercial agreement with Dubai-based Emirates Airline, which will see the African airline codesharing with the Gulf carrier, allowing the tourism hotspot to extend its route opportunities.

The agreement increases the number of seats allocated to Air Mauritius on Emirates flights, with the introduction of a daily A380 service on the Mauritius-Dubai route.

Air Mauritius began talks with the Gulf airline following an overhaul of its business model and a review of its network structure. It has optimised direct operations to high-potential hub destinations such as Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Mumbai, and New Delhi for Asia; Johannesburg and Nairobi for Africa; and key European hubs like Heathrow in the UK and Charles-de-Gaulle in France.

The introduction of the A380 to Mauritius is the first for any Indian Ocean destination and Emirates' first A380 service to the African continent. The move allows Emirates to bring an extra 153 passengers each day.

Ethiopian award

Ethiopian Airlines won the African Business of the Year award at an event held in New York. It was recognised for its "exemplary role as an African business model that is effectively harnessing opportunities and making profits, while at the same time registering fast growth, despite the tough economic times for the global aviation industry".

A web of intrigue

The Africa Aerospace and Defence (AAD) air show, which takes place at the Waterkloof air force base near Pretoria later this year, has launched a new website with special navigation to suit the different users, such as exhibitors, media and trade visitors.

The site also includes a 'university space' with information, targeting students that have interest in the industry and wish to meet with potential employers during the show.

Air Cairo aiming to double fleet

Air Cairo plans to double its fleet of four Airbus A320s by next summer as it moves increasingly from being a charter airline to a hybrid business model, also offering low-cost scheduled services.

The scheduled services are operated from Egyptian secondary airports. Air Cairo does not operate from Egypt's capital, to avoid competing with Egyptair. The national carrier is Air Cairo's largest shareholder.

Air Cairo chairman and CEO Yasser El Ramly, said the new aircraft would be used to strengthen scheduled services from airports such as Alexandria and Assiut. Scheduled services are concentrated on regional destinations, such as Tripoli, Amman and Jeddah.

El Ramly wants the new A320s in service by June and says they will be leased.

The company's expansion plans include operating 20 aircraft five years from now, he adds.



Yasser El Ramly: moving Air Cairo to hybrid model.

Astral's Stellar plan

Kenya's Astral Aviation and the UK's ANA Aviation Services have created a new strategic partnership in Africa with the acquisition of a B747-400F on wet-lease from Atlas Air.

The B747-400 freighter will initially operate twice weekly on a triangle route from Ostend, southbound to Lagos, Port Harcourt and Malabo, and will then ferry to Nairobi, where it will uplift perishables bound for London Manston and Ostend.

Helicopter 'first'

Tanzania's Everett Aviation has taken delivery of two AgustaWestland AW139 helicopters – the first to be certified for operations in the country. But more could follow.

Representatives from the Tanzanian Civil Aviation Authority have completed training in the United States and will be licensed to certify future AW139s in-country.

The aircraft will be supporting offshore oil and gas aviation services. A third aircraft will be dedicated to search and rescue operations.

16 die in Lagos crash

A Nigerian chartered aircraft crashed at Murtala Mohammed Airport in Lagos on October 3, killing 16 people.

According to reports, the Embraer 120 'Brasilia' turboprop – operated by Associated Aviation – suffered a suspected engine failure on take-off and crashed into the ground close to the fuel farm within the airport boundaries.

An investigation reported that the two pilots were arguing about the airworthiness of the aircraft ahead of take-off.

The aircraft had left the domestic terminal bound

Summer relief puts Lumka out in the cold

An intrepid aeronautical engineer trained by Denel Dynamics will spend the next three months in the Antarctic as part of South Africa's summer relief team.

Lumka Msibi, 23, will be part of the summer relief voyage to replenish the South African team at the Antarctica Expedition base (SANAE). During her voyage she will conduct science and weather research.

Lumka, who has an engineering degree from the School of Mechanical, Industrial and Aeronautical Engineering at the University of the Witwatersrand, served an internship at Denel Dynamics during the past year.

Denel Dynamics is a division of the Denel Group responsible for tactical missiles, guided-weapons and unmanned aerial vehicles. It recently expanded into space science with the incorporation of the satellite engineering company, Spacetecq.

Lumka volunteered to be part of the mission into the icy southern waters



following an advertisement placed by the South African National Space Agency (SANSA). The agency is conducting a number of space science and weather-related projects in Antarctica, as well as in Marion and the Gough Islands.

As part of the take-over team, she will assist in the installing of the super dual auroral radar network (SuperDARN) at the South African Antarctic Research Base, SANAE IV.

This is a high-frequency digital radar, which was built by SANSA space science engineers. The radar system is part of the SuperDARN, an international network of more than 30 radars used to monitor the dynamics of space weather.

In addition, she will participate in launching high-altitude balloons as part of a project funded by US space agency, NASA, called the balloon array for radiation belt relativistic electron losses (BARREL) project. Such research is vital in understanding space weather conditions that affect satellites orbiting the Earth within the Van Allen radiation belts.



Milestone helicopter is a game-changer

AgustaWestland's 600th AW139 has been delivered to a private customer in South Africa.

This aircraft is the second AW139 intermediate twin helicopter featuring a highly customised paint scheme and it will be used to perform corporate and passenger transport in South Africa as well as emergency medical services utilising a quick convertible EMS pod.

It will also be used to perform aerial game counting, monitoring the populations of wild animals typically found in African game reserves.

The AW139 has the provisioning to fit floatation gear, a cargo hook, and is fitted with an infrared camera system to assist pilots in poor visibility conditions (clouds and/or dust for landings on unprepared surfaces). Equipped with a particle separator system, the performance of the AW139 allows for operations anywhere in Africa and in hot and high conditions.

for Akure, in western Nigeria, 140 miles from Lagos. It burst into flames after hitting the ground.

Kenya business win

Kenya Airways won the award for Africa's Leading Airline – Business Class 2015 at the World Travel Awards in Nairobi. The airline beat off competition from Ethiopian Airlines, Air Namibia, EgyptAir, Air Maroc and South African Airlines.

Libyan role for AN-26

Charter specialist Chapman Freeborn has formed what it describes as an exclusive partnership with Air Libya to place and operationally manage an Antonov AN-26 aircraft in Libya.

The 5.5tonne-payload aircraft is available for ad hoc cargo charter requirements within Libya, as well as for international flights. It is based at Tripoli's Mitiga International Airport.

There are plans to use the aircraft to operate internal scheduled services to

connect Tripoli and Benghazi with Libya's more remote airfields, including regular operations to the oil fields in the south of the country.

Harnessing work

Ethiopian Airlines and Boeing have announced an agreement to double wire harness production at the airline's facility in Addis Ababa. The factory opened in 2009 and currently supplies seat-to-seat wire harnesses for all Boeing commercial aircraft programmes.

Reserve crash

A Cessna 208B Grand Caravan, reportedly operating with Shine Aviation, was involved in an accident during take-off from an airstrip in the Selous Game Reserve, Tanzania on October 12. The aircraft reportedly suffered a runway excursion and hit trees. The co pilot and a hunter were injured in the crash. There were no fatalities.



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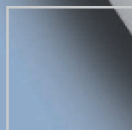
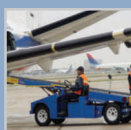
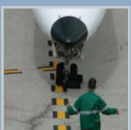
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Kenya milestone

Boeing has delivered a 777-300ER to GE Capital Aviation Services (GECAS) for lease to Kenya Airways. It is Kenya Airways' first 777-300ER and the largest aircraft in the carrier's fleet.

"The delivery marks a key milestone for us at Kenya Airways. The aircraft's long-haul capability is a perfect fit for our network expansion plans as it will enable us to serve our existing long-range markets much more effectively and facilitate the opening of routes in the near future," said Kenya Airways' CEO, Dr Titus Naikuni. "This is an important step as we continue opening up Africa to the rest of the world."

Board move by Bilgi

TAV Airports North Africa director Haluk Bilgi has been nominated to the ACI Africa Board. TAV operates two airports, Enfidha and Monastir in Tunisia. ACI Africa represents 200 airports in 47 countries.

ACI World is the airport industry organisation, which represents and advances the collective interests of 1,751 airports around the world, accounting for 95% of global air traffic.

Wet lease win

The west African carrier Gambia Bird has awarded London Stansted-based charter and airline sub-charter specialist, Titan Airways, a five-month wet lease contract.

Titan operated on behalf of Gambia Bird for the first time in early September, providing short-term aircraft, crew, maintenance and insurance (ACMI) coverage of operations from London Gatwick to airfields in Sierra Leone, Gambia, Senegal and Ghana.



Proflight takes the smart approach

Proflight Zambia has introduced a new ground and cabin crew uniform that reinforces the airline's flair for staying at the forefront of customer service. Pilots, cabin attendants and sales staff are all sporting the chic workwear, which is already turning heads with passengers.

The new uniforms for women include professional blue dresses and trousers, teamed with blouses, shirts and jackets, all sporting Proflight's trademark blue and orange colour scheme.

For men, as well as the existing pinstripe navy suit, there is now the addition of a stylish navy tie with the company's bird logo embroidered on it.

"Proflight prides itself on its excellent customer service and first impressions count. That is why we ensure that all of our frontline staff back their service ethos with an efficient and smart appearance too," said Proflight director of government and industry affairs Captain Philip Lemba.

■ **Zambian telecommunications provider Airtel Networks and airline Proflight Zambia, have signed a partnership agreement that will enable customers to purchase air tickets countrywide.**

Airtel customers will be able to pay for their air tickets using their 'Airtel Money' accounts. Airtel Money is a mobile money platform, which allows its customers to make payments and other non-cash transactions quickly and easily. It has been widely adopted by corporate, government and individual customers for the purchase of airtime, person-to-person cash transfers and utility bill payments.

"Proflight Zambia likes to be at the forefront of new ideas and technology and is constantly looking for ways to improve its customer experience. We are the first airline in Zambia to offer a mobile payment option," said Proflight's Captain Philip Lemba.

He added: "As our business grows in Zambia, we are constantly looking for opportunities to add value to our customers' experience of the Proflight brand. The strategic partnership with Airtel represents our commitment to the Zambian market and we will continue to explore additional opportunities with the company."

Since the successful completion of this initial three-day contract the two carriers have been in talks about possible longer-term cooperation.

ExecuJet double

ExecuJet Africa has been awarded the Flight Safety Foundation basic aviation risk standard (BARS) accreditation and the National Air Transportation Association (NATA) safety 1st ground rating.

Ettore Poggi, managing director of ExecuJet Africa said: "We are extremely proud to receive these highly respected industry approvals. Our clients demand the highest service and safety standards in

aviation operations and we are pleased to work with the relevant authorities to ensure these standards continue to be met."

African needs

Africa needs 970 new passenger aircraft over the next 20 years – 300 to support South African growth – according to Airbus.

In its latest global market forecast. The manufacturer said Africa requires 729 single-aisle aircraft, 213 twin aisles and 28 very large aircraft.

Airbus forecasts that Africa will achieve average annual passenger growth rates of 5.7%. This is well above the 4.7% world

average growth rate and far outstrips more developed markets.

Superjumbo special

Air France will operate a special Airbus A380 flight to Abidjan on January 28 to coincide with the International Forum for Investments in Côte d'Ivoire.

Air France said it hopes to serve Abidjan by A380 on a regular basis.

After Johannesburg, Abidjan will become the second destination on the African continent to be served by the Air France superjumbo.

"This special flight, with the most iconic aircraft in our fleet, demonstrates our

commitment to support economic recovery in Cote d'Ivoire and the development of exchange with the rest of the world," said Frank Legré, SVP for Africa at Air France-KLM.

Arik increases fleet

Nigerian airline Arik Air has increased the size of its fleet to 23 aircraft and boosted its London to Lagos route, with the introduction of a new Airbus A330-200 twin-engine aircraft.

While the new A330 will serve London-Lagos, it could be deployed on one of a number of potential new routes to South America and the Middle East in future, the airline said.

Ethiopian graduates

Some 39 pilots and 45 aviation technicians have graduated from the Ethiopian Aviation Academy.

Among the pilots, 20 were the second batch of multi-crew pilot license (MPL) cadets, many from Yemen and South Sudan.

Ethiopia is the first in Africa to deliver this integrated and competency-based pilot training programme.

CEO Tewolde GebreMariam said: "By 2025, the Ethiopian Aviation Academy will become the leading aviation-training centre in Africa, with annual capacity for 4,000 trainees. Our academy will nurture the growth of the African aviation industry by providing world-class training services to sister African airlines in the continent and in the Middle East."

Air Algérie trio

Air Algérie has signed an MoU for three A330-200 passenger aircraft as part of the carrier's continued growth plans.

The new aircraft were ordered at the Dubai Airshow and will be

Peace plan for SpringChild's Dornier

German-based completions and refurbishment company 328 has finished work on a Dornier 328 aircraft for SpringChild Investments for the use of its Nigerian-based new airline, Air Peace.

Privately owned Air Peace will be operating out of Murtala Mohammed Airport, Lagos. The new airline will be offering charter, cargo and scheduled flight services, with its fleet of three Dornier 328 jets specifically configured for different purposes, in addition to a number of Boeing 737 aircraft.

The customer acceptance of MSN3200 took place in October following the completion of the reconfiguration programme, which took six months, finishing on time, on budget and on schedule.

The aircraft was previously in VIP configuration but was reconfigured into a 27-seat layout at 328's Oberpfaffenhofen headquarters. It showcases a first in Dornier 328 conversions as



the seat configuration boasts four forward-facing business class seats at the front of the aircraft, complemented by a further 23 seats in an economy format in the aft cabin.

The four business seats have been engineered to slide away from each other after take-off, so improving passenger comfort once the aircraft is in cruise mode.

Robin Dunlop, of UK-based CTM Design, who regularly works with the 328 team, designed the new interior for

MSN3200.

SpringChild Investments is also looking to sign up for long-term maintenance contracts with type certificate holder 328.

A further two Dornier 328 aircraft have also joined the fleet. MSN3221 is in a 13-seat VIP formation and has already been positioned into Nigeria, while MSN 3171, which has been sourced from the USA, features a 32-seat layout. It is anticipated that further aircraft will join the fleet over the next year.

deployed on medium and long-haul routes from the Air Algérie hub in Algiers. Air Algérie has already ordered a total of five Airbus A330s, which have all been delivered to date.

Kuuchi steps up

IATA has appointed Raphael Kuuchi as the association's vice president for Africa. The appointment begins on February 17.

Kuuchi joins IATA from the African Airlines

Association (AFRAA), where he was the director of commercial, corporate and industry affairs, based in Nairobi, Kenya.

He succeeds Mike Higgins, who has become IATA's regional head of airport, cargo and passenger services for Europe.

A suite deal

Ethiopian Airlines has selected Rockwell Collins to provide the full suite of avionics equipment for its new and growing fleet of 10 Boeing 777s. The selection includes Rockwell Collins' MultiScan threat detection system, GLU-925 multi-mode receiver (MMR), traffic alert and collision avoidance system (TCAS II) and SATCOM.

Abuja blaze

Flights were suspended at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport in Abuja, Nigeria, following an incident with a Saudia cargo aircraft in November.

Described as a "serious incident" the Saudia Boeing 747 cargo aircraft overran the runway and

ran into a maintenance area before bursting into flames, according to witnesses. The fire was promptly put out and there were no reported casualties.

Memorial mural

Mozambique carrier LAM has unveiled a mural to honour and remember those who died in the November crash of an Embraer E190 in Namibia. None of the 33 people on board survived.

It is one of the worst accidents on record in Mozambique's civil aviation history.

The memorial is located immediately outside LAM's head office. Families were present at the unveiling of the mural and placed white roses and other flowers at its base as a mark of respect to those who died.

"This mural is a temporary arrangement to provide an early opportunity for people who want to commemorate their loved ones' memories; we intend to erect a permanent memorial," a LAM spokesperson said.

Safety seminar

The non-profit regional affiliate of the Flight Safety Foundation, AviAssist Foundation, is to hold its 2Gether 4Safety seminar and expo at the Protea Hotel in Entebbe, Uganda from March 13-14.

In its third edition, 2Gether 4Safety will deliver jam-packed days of hot topic updates in aviation safety, ranging from airports, flight deck issues, and air traffic control.

The event is recognised as Africa's only international seminar dedicated to operational aviation safety issues and solutions. More information is available on www.2gether4safety.org

Aviacare relaunch

The former owner of Spanish FBO network Assistair, Catherine Gaisenband, has relaunched Aviacare.

The company is focusing on Africa, where it has identified numerous opportunities, and is already in discussions with a number of companies.



Fleet boost for Air Namibia

Windhoek-based Air Namibia has taken delivery of two A330-200s from Airbus. The aircraft are leased from US-based, Intrepid.

The airline's A330 features a two-class cabin layout, seating 244 passengers, comprising 30 business class seats and 214 economy class seats.

"The high efficiency and low operating costs of the A330 makes it a perfect fit into our fleet," said managing director Theopoltina Namases.

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Abdel Aziz Fadel:
"We will recover again."

EGYPT RISING AGAIN

*Two consecutive revolutions have wrought a heavy toll on Egypt's tourism sector but civil aviation minister, Abdel Aziz Fadel, tells **Martin Rivers** that long-term recovery is written in the script.*

The decision by Britain's Foreign & Commonwealth Office to relax its travel advice for Egypt could not have come too soon for the north African country, whose leaders are desperate to consign the political upheaval of recent years to history.

Announcing the move on November 8 – two days before Cairo hosted the inaugural Egyptian Development & Strategies of Civil Aviation (EDSCA) conference – Britain said the Red Sea resorts of Sharm El Sheikh and Hurghada were once again safe for holidaymakers.

A fortnight later it added Cairo and the Great Pyramid of Giza to the list of approved destinations, easing the stranglehold on a tourism sector that contributes 12% of Egypt's GDP.

Travel warnings had been issued by governments around the world after the July 3 overthrowing of Mohamed Morsi, the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood party that was democratically elected in 2012. Regardless of whether his downfall was a popular revolution or a military coup d'état, it sowed widespread anxiety in foreign capitals.

Indeed, despite 26 countries having lifted travel bans by the time of writing, Egypt's future is far from clear. Britain still cautions its citizens against visiting more-volatile regions such as north Sinai, where 10 soldiers were killed in a suicide bombing in November.

But, as Egypt's fledgling institutions wind their way towards another

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on Page 16

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attempt at democracy in 2014, the country's exemplary aviation sector is pushing forward with plans to expand its fleet, modernise its airports, and develop Cairo as an intercontinental hub.

Amid a palpable sense of optimism at the EDSCA conference, civil aviation minister Abdel Aziz Fadel said he is determined to bring Egypt's long-delayed expansion plans to fruition.

"We have had a very clear vision from 2003/04. The aviation sector is well organised, and when I was appointed minister this was only a continuation, not a new beginning," he said. "No-one is making any big changes to the plan. We know very well what will be the expected number of passengers in the years 2025-50, and we know very well how many aircraft EgyptAir should operate."

Focusing on long-term prospects is doubtless tempting for a country still mired in uncertainty. Tourist numbers plummeted 46% year-on-year in August, as travellers heeded warnings to stay away.

Fadel estimated that overall traffic is down 60% on 2010 and 50% on 2012. His description of the Muslim Brotherhood as "terrorists" underscored the government's rigid stance, but the military-backed interim authorities are working to reassure foreigners.



"The government is going on to implement milestones in democracy, starting with the constitution," Fadel explained. "It will be followed by the election of the parliament by March, followed by presidential elections by June. Egyptians now are establishing a new country, a new Egypt, based on democracy and improving the economy."

As the flag-carrier, EgyptAir has the most to gain from enticing the tourists back.

Hussein Sherif, vice-president commercial, admitted that the airline is based in a geographically "hot area" that will always be prone to shocks. But living in this tough neighbourhood, he added, makes Egyptians resilient.

"We are used to dealing with crises," Sherif insisted. "Right after January 2011 [when

Maintaining the highest of standards

When EgyptAir was restructured into a holding company in 2002, its maintenance arm took a strategic decision to expand third-party work.

Just one decade later – having secured the necessary EASA 145 and FAA 145 approvals – EgyptAir Maintenance & Engineering (EGME) has grown its customer base to 130. Its profit of about 100 million Egyptian Pounds in 2012/13 offered sorely-needed relief for the parent company.

"We are fully capable of doing line and base maintenance for all mature, modern aircraft," said Mohamed Samir Ibrahim, EGME strategic planning manager. Three hangars plus workshops for engines, mechanical components and avionics

Security first, then sun, sea and sand

While the main gateway to Egypt is managed by Cairo Airport Company, 19 other airports are owned and operated by the Egyptian Airports Company (EAC).

Spread across its vast territory, they include Sharm El Sheikh in Sinai; Hurghada off the Red Sea coast; Luxor in the Nile Valley; Sohag in upper Egypt; and Shark Elowainat in the western desert.

EAC chairman Gad el-Karim Nasr said the company had not recovered from the first revolution when the second struck.

Passenger numbers fell from 21.5 million in 2009/10 to 17 million after the overthrow of Mubarak.

By 2012/13 they had begun climbing again – up to 19.5 million – but the overthrow of Morsi in July precipitated a 60% slump in first-quarter traffic. "Perhaps by now we could have been 27 million," Nasr speculated. "We have really lost a lot."

Nonetheless, the growth continues.

Sharm El Sheikh will add a 10-million capacity terminal by 2018, more than doubling its existing size. In Hurghada, a new 7.5-million capacity terminal will be opened by June this year, along with a 4km-long, 60m-wide runway capable of handling A380s.

"I cannot tell you about tomorrow, but I know that Egypt will have a high-speed recovery," Nasr said. "Before enjoying sun, sea and sand, you must enjoy your security."

previous president Hosni Mubarak was overthrown], we had a downturn in traffic. We made a quick recovery in June 2011. Then we had another downturn in November, and recovered the following summer.

"Now we are in another downturn. We will recover again. When the tour operators start publishing deals online, the tourists will not wait any longer."

EgyptAir's current fleet comprises 81 aircraft, including 12 Embraer 170s used by regional subsidiary EgyptAir Express, and four Airbus A320s deployed by charter operator Air Cairo. About one-third of the fleet is wide-bodies, including four A300 freighters.

The flag-carrier has just one outstanding order

provide an extensive range of technical capabilities.

Although the 787 and A380 are not serviced, Ibrahim confirmed: "We are keeping an eye on those new models as they become more in operation around us. Third-party business already accounts for 20% of revenue, but we want to grow that figure to 25% "in the near future".

Further approvals from civil aviation authorities will contribute to this expansion, Ibrahim said.

Having formerly served as EGME's chief executive, Fadel keeps a close eye on the business. "The maintenance unit makes the highest profit of the whole EgyptAir group," he beamed. "It is very, very successful."

– an A330-300 due in 2016 – but its appetite for expansion could hardly be more pronounced. Consultancy studies have recommended that the fleet grows to 127 aircraft by 2025, with acquisitions based on operating leases rather than purchases. At present, the only leased units are six Boeing 777-300ERs.

"We will have to acquire what will be new in the market 10 years from now," Fadel predicted. "For wide-bodies, that will be A350 or 787 or 777X. For narrow-bodies, maybe it will be the A320neo or the 737-800 MAX, and also maybe the Embraer 195 or the Bombardier CSeries."

Declining to voice a preference for specific types, he stressed that no decisions have been taken and "each has its advantages and disadvantages".

Ambitious growth targets are nothing new for EgyptAir. Former civil aviation minister Hussein Massoud spoke of his desire to order wide-bodies between 2015 and 2020. Those plans were disrupted by the first revolution, but the airline continued taking delivery of new 777s, A330s and 737-800s, even as the political situation unravelled in 2011.



Receiving new aircraft during a downturn may seem risky, but the airline's older, fuel-inefficient jets were exacerbating its losses. Fadel is now looking to sell or lease 17 aircraft – four 737-500s, two 777-200s, three A340s and eight A320s – with orders taking a back seat until at least some existing units are shed. "We are using the 17 for now, but as we succeed in finding contracts we will start to look for new ones," he confirmed. Deals with three companies, including Libya's Buraq Air, have already been struck.

On the network front, EgyptAir has become adept at re-deploying capacity. Services to Tokyo and Osaka were axed after Japan's travel advisory pushed load factors down to 5%. But the airline has steadily grown its focus on Africa, expanding capacity by about 60% between 2011 and 2013. Harare and Abidjan were added to the network in June, while frequencies have also increased to Abuja, Accra, Kano and Lagos. N'Djamena flights will begin in spring 2014.

Elsewhere, long-standing plans to transform Cairo into an inter-continental hub mean that Europe, North America and Asia are under constant review. Manchester and Toronto were introduced last summer, Sherif noted, adding: "We are now targeting Hong Kong, Shanghai, Vietnam and a second point in India.

He admitted that sixth-freedom traffic could be low-yielding, but shrugged: "This is what is available right now."

Star Alliance partners will bolster passenger flows, aided by the under-one-roof concept at Cairo International Airport's Terminal 3. Liberalised visa restrictions that allow transit passengers to enjoy day-trips to the pyramids could further enhance the hub proposition, Fadel

suggested, while also giving a welcome fillip to the tourism sector.

“Our plan is that if a passenger comes from India and is going to London – and he stays here six or seven hours – we can arrange a tour of the pyramids,” the minister explained. “The number of transit passengers at EgyptAir is now 30%. Before, it was almost nothing. This proves that we have the geographic advantage and we have the facilities.”

Infrastructure growth requires hefty funding and Fadel conceded that some projects were disrupted by the second revolution.

The African Development Bank, the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the World Bank halted talks over funding for new terminals in Sharm El Sheikh, Alexandria and Cairo respectively. “But they have now agreed to continue,” he said. “There is no problem for financing.”

The sector’s strong credit rating will be called upon again when details for Cairo Airport City are finalised. The aerotropolis is expected to cost about \$1 billion, with investors due to be approached this year and construction likely to last until the end of the decade. “It will contain a cargo terminal, leisure facilities and manufacturing,” Fadel explained. “Goods can come from the Suez Port by road to be assembled here and shipped by air. It will be a good step for the economy of Egypt.”



Another long-term plan focuses on possible equity investments by EgyptAir in African airline partners. The flag-carrier currently serves 19 destinations on the continent with its own metal. Since late 2012, it has been pursuing a 50/50 joint venture with Ghana’s CTK Citylink.

“I believe we need to have a footprint in west Africa,” Fadel said. “We are just awaiting the acceptance of the appraisal we sent to Citylink. The volume of passengers will not be high at first, so we can start with the E-170, and then maybe after that we can change to 737-800s. After we achieve success in this project, then we will look to another project. Maybe one joint venture in west Africa, one in east Africa, and one in central Africa.”

Before spending money on foreign carriers, however, the airline wants to improve its own financial performance. EgyptAir trimmed its loss for the 2012/13 fiscal year ending in June to 1.6 billion Egyptian pounds (\$232 million), halving the previous year’s loss.

While the cost-cutting continues, Fadel’s overarching priority is to strengthen overseas ties and reassure foreigners that they are welcome in Egypt. “We know it is to our benefit to be neutral, and to have good relations with all countries,” he said.

“Egypt is the biggest country in the Arab world. It is a pivot for the region, and we support our



“We know it is to our benefit to be neutral, and to have good relations with all countries.”

Abdel Aziz Fadel

neighbours. The Egyptian people are also very friendly. No-one ever comes to Egypt and feels like a foreigner.”

There will, inevitably, be obstacles on the path to recovery. Support for the Muslim Brotherhood by Qatar and Turkey has already prompted a cooling of bilateral ties, with Al Jazeera journalists and Turkey’s ambassador being expelled from the

country. Nonetheless, Egypt has form for staging quick recoveries.

In November 1997, Islamist militants massacred 58 foreign tourists in Luxor in a terror attack that sent shockwaves around the globe. “You cannot imagine what I was feeling as I heard this news,” said Sherif, who was at the time EgyptAir’s manager for Germany. “It was a disaster. No hope.” Tourist traffic immediately plummeted 60%.

“But in May 1998, six months afterwards, we were operating 471-seater jumbos between Dusseldorf and Hurghada,” he recalled. “We were even double-shuttling.” By 1999, visitor numbers had rocketed to 4.5 million, well above the 3.7 million seen two years previously. “So when will the traffic return this time? I could say not more than three months. As soon as the political situation stabilises, and the media calms down, the tourists will be back.”

Kamal: We are ready for

Egyptian politics and business has begun to stabilise following the second revolution in July 2013, according to Egypt Air CEO Hossam Kamal.

The Arab Spring saw the carrier's load factor fall from 81% to 65%, from 14 million passengers a year in 2010 to nine million in 2012. Kamal says this has since recovered by almost 30%.

"Yes, the number of tourists and businesspeople flying to Egypt has decreased, but they are returning. People will always want to come to Egypt. Soon we will exceed 2010's figures," he said.



He added that this was due to reliable demand from certain types of passengers: "We have four kinds – tourists, businesspeople, ex-patriots and seasonal, such as for the Hajj or Umrah.

"Ex-patriots and pilgrims are fixed. Revolution or no revolution, it doesn't matter,

Hossam Kamal, EgyptAir's new CEO, was in bullish mood when he met up with Tom Pleasant at the Dubai Airshow.

they will still come. For the rest, they have the right to still be afraid of coming to Egypt, but most of the country is safe now, very safe."

Nonetheless, there is no denying the political instability has harmed the airline.

"Of course we've been affected by what's happened over the past two years," said Kamal. "But EgyptAir's network is still one of the best in the area.

"We have 22 destinations in Africa and are already expanding our network, opening new routes to Toronto, Manchester, Harare and

Abidjan, and we're planning more, looking at Los Angeles, Hong Kong and Jakarta."

To serve the expanding network, EgyptAir currently has 81 aircraft in its fleet. Nine are grounded, such as A340s and 737-500s, typically due to being older than 20 years.

"They aren't grounded only because of the drop in passengers, but also because some of them simply aren't economical right now. They're too old. The A340 was a good aircraft at the time, but now fuel burn and maintenance make it a bit costly," he said.



Kamal says the market is not good for selling those three A340s so, for the time being, EgyptAir is using them for peak traffic, such as for pilgrims, but it is still looking for long-term lessors.

As for new aircraft, no orders have been made yet, but they are expected to be announced very soon.



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“Our plan is to have 127 aircraft by 2025, of which 32 will be wide-bodies,” he said. “We haven’t made any orders yet, we’re still studying the proposals, but time’s running out for the production slots, so we will announce our orders within a month or two.

“We have some A320s we would like to replace with the A320neo or the 737MAX. Also, we are intending to phase out the A330-200s by 2018, replacing them either with A350s or 787s.”

Replacements will also include freighters. The airline carried 170,000 tonnes in 2012 and Kamal expects this to remain stable in 2014. To that end, he intends to upgrade the current freighter fleet of one A300B4-200F and two A300-600RFs with A330Fs.



Another revenue stream is the company’s training and MRO facilities.

“We have the biggest and the oldest training and engineering centre in Africa and a joint venture Rolls-Royce station in Cairo for engine maintenance.

“They have 128 customers from all over the world and remain an important part of our company and strategy.”

While Kamal admitted the airline had yet to post a profit for any month this financial year, it is reducing its losses and he was confident the passenger and financial figures would rebound to pre-revolution levels by 2014.

“Yes, our finances are not strong, but there is not an airline in the world that has passed through a situation as we have at EgyptAir,” he said. “In the meantime we are in negotiation with the government to reduce our taxes and we are having some discussions with airlines in the area about partnerships.”

However, he said he was not considering equity partnerships. “We are surviving and already running fast on our expansion plans,” he added. “We are looking to a better future.”



Hossam Kamal: “Most of the country is safe now, very safe.”

Egyptian airports bullish, despite the slump

The continuing unrest in Egypt has dealt a blow to the country’s airports as tourism numbers have collapsed – but representatives of the Egyptian airports at World Routes are optimistic about recovery.

“It is all about perception,” said Joachim von Winning, chief commercial officer of Cairo International Airport. “Germany has lifted its advice against travel to Egypt but there are still warnings from the UK and the United States.”

Traffic to Egypt dropped after the revolution during the Arab Spring period in 2011 but, during the period of stability, numbers began to grow.

“We had our best figures ever in June this year and were optimistic we would better our 15million target, but then came the violent gatherings and the coup d’état. Our numbers plummeted.

“Then there were the harsh crowd control measures and the numbers plummeted even more,” von Winning said.

By September, the management of Egyptian Airport Company, which manages 12 of the country’s secondary and main tourist airports, and Cairo Airport Company, feared the worst. “The sad thing is that the areas where there are problems are well known. The main tourist areas are not affected. There is no real threat to travellers,” von Winning said.

Despite the problems, Cairo is continuing to invest in the rebuilding of Terminal 2. “It will be open in 2015,” von Winning said.

Routes meetings have also shown up the divisions in perception. “We have seen the Gulf carriers want more slots, as they can see that it will pick up; the European carriers want discounts and the new airlines are very hesitant because of the current situation,” von Winning said.

While cargo numbers are stagnant, Cairo has continued with the construction of a new cargo village. “It will come back. We are positive,” von Winning concluded.



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Lagging behind: Elijah Chingoshu, AFRAA's secretary general, calls for change.

Inset: In session: active debate allowed airline leaders to air their concerns over key issues.

OUR CENTURY OF OPPORTUNITY

Africa's leading airline chiefs came together on the Indian Ocean coast at Diani in Kenya for the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) annual assembly. Alan Peaford reports from the event.

Africa has the potential to be a significant force in aviation on the back of robust economic growth forecasts, but the secretary general of the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) warns that the continent's airlines are facing challenges from outside, with unfair advantages being offered by African governments to foreign airlines.

In his opening address to the AFRAA annual assembly, Elijah Chingoshu said Africa has some of the fastest-growing economies worldwide, with north African economies also rebounding after disruptions arising from revolutions in 2011.

"Africa attracted 52 million visitors and receipts from tourism for 2012 amounted to more than \$36 billion," Chingoshu said. "Sub-Saharan Africa is outpacing other regions in tourism growth. Africa's tourism revenues are rising fast and are set to contribute more and more to world activity."

But, he also warned, African airlines were not getting their share of the market.

"The performance of the African aviation industry is lagging behind those of the rest of

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the world at less than 3% of global revenue passenger miles (RPKs)," Chingoshu said. "The growth is heavily constrained by the high industry costs, inadequate infrastructure at several airports, slow implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision (YD), and lack of a single traffic rights negotiating body with respect to third parties, like the EU. Nonetheless, demand for air transport has increased steadily over the past years, with passenger numbers and freight traffic growing significantly."

His concerns were echoed by the assembly's principal guest, IATA chief executive Tony Tyler.

"Africa is the second most populous continent and home to an estimated one-seventh of the world's population. Yet it represents just 3% of global airline traffic. I view this as a tremendous opportunity. Other air markets have matured, or are in the process of maturing; for Africa, the future of aviation is still being created," Tyler said in his keynote address.



Africa's time: IATA chief executive Tony Tyler argued that this should be Africa's century of flight.

"My message today is that, by keeping and defending global standards at the core of our amazing industry, we will build a future that is successful. There is no reason why the next 100 years of commercial aviation cannot become Africa's century of flight," he said.

Tyler hit out at the governments who are weakening the integrity of the air transport system by introducing different, and sometimes conflicting, passenger rights regulations.

"At least 60 governments have introduced such rules and several more are considering imposing them. These go beyond the simple guarantees that governments should provide and what is imposed on other industries. The result is a patchwork quilt of different rules, which are costly for airlines and confusing for everybody –including passengers," he said.

He criticised African governments that have failed to follow the Montreal Convention (MC99) on electronic documents in air cargo, such as electronic air waybills (e-AWB).

"This is very important for African states that rely



Angolan minister, Augusto da Silva Tomas: reforming the country's aviation.

Angola award highlights the way for aviation

The Angolan government received a special award from AFRAA at the association's general assembly.

It won the award for its work on pushing down fuel costs, using a three-step approach to aid the aviation industry, recognising that air transport is the key to international relations, and for taking a dynamic approach to the country's aviation restructuring plan.

According to IATA, the reduction of fuel fees has resulted in \$109.6 million in savings for airlines operating to the country. This is seen as being the first step in a long-term campaign to tackle the relatively high price of fuel in parts of Africa.

Accepting the award from IATA CEO, Tony Tyler, was the country's minister of transport, Augusto da Silva Tomás who said: "It is a great honour. We have carried out some great projects in Angola. We are in the process of restructuring the aviation industry in our country; we have the modernisation of Luanda for 15million passengers; we are reforming our legal sector to meet ICAO and EU requirements.

"We have adopted a major plan for the sector for the next four years, which includes restructuring our national airline TAAG, as well as our civil aviation authority and the national airports company. Training of our human capital is a key part of this reorganisation and essential for the growth aviation sector in our country."

on air cargo to transport high-value, time-sensitive cargo to markets around the world. But, in order to use e-AWBs, airlines need to ensure that both the origin and destination countries have ratified MC99. This is not the case in many parts of the continent. In fact, of the 88 countries that have not ratified MC99, the majority are in Africa.

"The African Civil Aviation Commission has urged states to ratify MC99, as did the recent 38th ICAO Assembly. We need airlines in Africa to engage their governments to ensure they understand that MC99 is a win-win for all stakeholders," Tyler added.

African governments' approaches to taxation are also hindering development of air transport across the continent.

"Many governments in Africa treat aviation as a luxury, rather than as a vital enabler of development," Tyler said. "Ethiopia, for example, imposes a tax on fuel uplift for international flights to support its stabilisation fund. This contravenes the Chicago Convention and ICAO principles.



"Mozambique and Tanzania recently implemented significant increases in air traffic control charges without consultation. We believe that these will eventually have detrimental effects for both. By engaging in a dialogue, we can often come to win-win solutions. Tanzania provides a good example. The Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority proposed steep increases in both air navigation and safety oversight charges.

"By engaging in a dialogue we agreed on a much more reasonable increase. And by working together going forward, I am confident that we can strike the right balance so that such charges deliver value for money."

Tyler cited the hosts of the conference, Kenya, for "misguided charges" which add unwarranted costs to airlines.

"The new rail levy tax applied on jet fuel for international flights adds an estimated \$13 million to airlines' fuel bills every year. The VAT applied on the KPC pipeline from Mombasa to Nairobi is another example that directly affects airline costs.

"We need to engage governments in a more robust dialogue so that they understand the consequences of such actions on the industry and, ultimately, on their economies," he said.

Across the whole conference there was an optimism that prospects for the air transport



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Putting the beach within easier reach

Ukunda Airfield, on Kenya's east coast, is to expand to a full airport, according to the governor of the Kwale region, Salim Mvurya.

The airfield serves Diani beach, at the heart of the south coast region of Kenya to the south of Mombasa, and is a popular tourist resort.

Speaking at the AFRAA assembly, Kenya Airways CEO Dr Titus Naikuni, called on the local government to invest in the infrastructure.

At the moment Kenya Airways serves Mombasa, which because of ferries and traffic can mean at least a three-hour journey from the airport just 50km away.

The Ukunda airstrip is just minutes from the international hotels and is currently served by Safarilink, using Cessna Caravans and a Dash-8

from its base at Wilson Airport in Nairobi.

Governor Mvurya responded by announcing that plans were advancing.

Mvurya said that there were two competing plans for the extension of the 1,174 metre strip to enable it to be served by regional airlines.

"We have had interest from a Japanese consortium, which would finance the expansion, and we have met the permanent secretary in Nairobi to talk about the national government funding the development.

"We want to build a terminal and enlarge the parking area," he said.

Kwale County is also looking to improve highways in the area and develop a link to the new airport.



The existing Ukunda Airfield at Diani is a regular stop for Cessna Caravans bringing tourists daily from Nairobi.

industry in Africa were growing. This was backed by hard statistics.

According to secretary general Chingoshu, from less than 40 million passengers carried in 2004 by African airlines, passenger numbers have increased to 62.9 million in 2012; a cumulative growth of 61.5% (average annual growth 7.8%), up from the 2011 figure of 56.4 million.

Chingoshu said that the introduction of low-cost carriers had led to a growth in passenger numbers – particularly reaching people who had never flown before.

"Domestic passenger numbers increased by over 8% to 19.4 million," he said. "Low-cost airlines, particularly in South Africa, Kenya, Egypt, Morocco and, lately, Tanzania, continue to aggressively promote and attract more passengers."

According to the AFRAA report, intra-Africa passenger numbers went up 12.75% to 16.8 million, up from 14.9 million in 2011. Chingoshu said this growth was driven largely by the rapidly growing business and trade between African countries and the growing middle class, some of whom now prefer air travel.

A major problem for the African airlines is increased competition by foreign airlines – particularly from the Middle East – and almost 80% of intercontinental flights are with non-African airlines. Resolving this issue is one of the key strands of AFRAA strategy.

"It is necessary to ensure that African aviation



Missing out: Air Uganda CEO Cornwell Muleya said African airlines are denied opportunity.

plays its part in ensuring the economic, social and political integration of African states," Chingoshu said. "It is critical that the African Union puts in place policies that facilitates the development of African aviation. These include ensuring full implementation of YD; negotiating as a block and not as individual countries; ensuring an even

playing field and avoiding favouring non-African carriers that are given more frequencies of services by some states that are then denied their African counterparts; ensuring that costs of doing business in Africa are competitive; and helping to ensure the establishment of a major African hub in west and central Africa," he said.

Various sessions allowed chief executives to raise their concerns over the lack of unity in the market.

Air Uganda chief executive, Cornwell Muleya, said there were too many examples where airlines would want to increase frequency of flights from one African country to another but were held back because of restrictions.

Examples from the floor included Kenya Airways, which currently flies twice weekly to Angola – but would ideally offer a daily service.

"We are stopped by a bilateral agreement system," the company said.

Muleya said airlines needed to use their influence to open up markets or access.

"We talk about new markets but if you look at the 25 largest airports today, they are the same as 10 years ago. We always want to go to the same places, yet sometimes they are the most closed markets."

The Air Uganda CEO said his "small airline" would be looking at developing some small niche routes. "We see places like Somalia. There are good opportunities for putting in a good service," he said.

*Not content with the breakneck expansion of recent years, Ethiopian Airlines is plotting further growth across all corners of Africa and beyond. Chief executive Tewolde Gebremariam tells **Martin Rivers** how the flag-carrier is primed to bring connectivity to the continent.*

AIR SMILES

«Ethiopian Airlines toujours en pointe» – Page 26

Articles about African aviation almost always pay heed to two inescapable truths. The first is the continent's undisputed economic potential, stemming from its vast natural resources and youthful, aspirational workforce. The second, less encouragingly, is the near-insurmountable challenges that prevent airlines from unlocking Africa's potential.

Most politicians concede that civil aviation will play a key role in igniting and sustaining pan-African prosperity. In practice, however, a toxic mixture of bureaucracy, corruption and protectionism keeps much of the industry grounded.

African governments still regard flying as a middle-class luxury deserving of heavy taxation. They are also in no hurry to liberalise regulations and bilateral restrictions that protect the status quo for privileged operators.

But there are some exceptions to the rule. State-owned Ethiopian Airlines has grown its turnover by 700% since 2005, and it plans to expand another fivefold by 2025.

The Star Alliance carrier's fleet will double to 120 aircraft over the next decade, with management betting on a brighter future for African skies. Growth will be driven not only by its hub in Addis Ababa, but also by subsidiaries in three other corners of Africa, plus the group's related business units.

"The government looks at aviation as an important national strategic asset, and that's why it has invested in airports throughout the country," noted Tewolde Gebremariam, the flag-carrier's chief executive.

"We have 18 domestic airports in Ethiopia. Fifteen are asphalted, so can handle jet services.

It's very hard to find this many airports in any other African country."

Although government support has enabled the sector to flourish, he stressed that the 67-year-old airline runs as an autonomous, self-governing commercial entity. "Aviation is treated as private sector in Ethiopia," Gebremariam said. "We are an airline that manages its own growth with its own internal finance. If the growth is not profitable, we would not continue to be attractive to financiers and creditors."

Elsewhere in Africa, governments tend to control the purse strings of their flag-carriers through parastatal boards of directors. South African Airways has encountered such political meddling more than most, but interference is endemic across the continent.

Mindful of the scope for improvements, Ethiopian is working to export best practices and create a positive ripple effect across east Africa.



Training has become a major focal point. About 1,000 students pass through the flag-carrier's aviation academy each year, and Gebremariam plans to grow that figure to 4,000.

"Investment in human resources – particularly training in the aviation sector – has lagged behind in Africa," the chief executive warned, though he dismissed criticism of the continent's safety record as "factually incorrect". Pan-African statistics are heavily distorted by a handful of countries with weak regulatory oversight, he said.

Other business units will also contribute to Ethiopian's revenue target of \$10 billion by 2025. The airline is among the continent's foremost

providers of maintenance, cargo, catering and ground services. "We are positioning these highly-sought-after services as profit centres, looking for third-party business in addition to supporting Ethiopian Airlines," Gebremariam said.

He admitted that Africa's aviation infrastructure has "definitely lagged behind" the rest of the world, but pointed to evidence of progress. In addition to expansion work at Addis Ababa Bole Airport, terminal upgrades in Cairo, Egypt; and Johannesburg, South Africa; are increasing capacity at the continent's main hubs. Angola's capital city, Luanda, will also soon benefit from a brand new airport.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) from China has driven much of Africa's infrastructure growth. Between 2010 and May 2012, China approved \$11.3 billion in concessional loans for 92 African projects. Little wonder, then, that Ethiopian is keen to broaden its links with the Asian powerhouse.

Shanghai, Chongqing and Chengdu are all being evaluated for inclusion in the route network. The airline already operates daily services to Beijing, Guangzhou, Hangzhou and Hong Kong.

Ethiopian currently accounts for 58% of direct capacity between Africa and China, with second-place Kenya Airways trailing far behind at just 12%. But Gebremariam knows that competitors are seeking to capitalise on Sino-African relations. "You have very large Chinese carriers who so far have been very busy with their domestic market," the CEO said. "It's a huge market, but later on down the line they are going to look for international routes.

"Our priority is to develop our own hub, and



“The government looks at aviation as an important national strategic asset.”

TEWOLDE GEBREMARIAM

to develop long-haul routes to mainland China,” he continued. “We are also studying Tokyo [Japan], Manila [Philippines] and Singapore.” Flights to the latter destination were announced late last year with the first service beginning in December.

China is not alone in spying African business opportunities. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, total FDI flows into Africa grew by 5% last year to reach \$50 billion. That comes despite an average 18% fall in FDI around the world. Africa may not be booming yet, but it is gearing up for growth.

With interest in the continent rising, Ethiopian’s route network has expanded to 77 international destinations spread across five continents. Asian growth is the priority, but other regions have not been forgotten. Los Angeles and Chicago are under review in the Americas, where the flag-carrier serves just four cities (Washington, Toronto, Sao Paolo and Rio de Janeiro). Russia’s capital Moscow and unspecified cities in Australia could also be added to the network, Gebremariam said.

New routes will not necessarily connect directly with Addis Ababa. When the airline launched open-jaw services to Brazil in July, it included a stopover in Lomé, Togo to pick up feeder traffic from ASKY Airlines – the west African carrier founded and 40%-owned by Ethiopian. Their partnership is not an isolated arrangement. By investing in affiliates like ASKY, Ethiopian is pursuing a multi-hub model that will dramatically broaden its reach across Africa.

“The joint ventures are part of a bigger strategy under Vision

2025 – a 15-year development plan,” explained Gebremariam.

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“So far we’ve been serving the continent from one hub in Addis Ababa. But going forward – when you have very strong competition coming from the Gulf, Turkey and Europe – we need to position the carrier as a pan-continental business.”

ASKY’s primary function is to bring connectivity to a sub-region that never fully recovered from the demise of Air Afrique, Ghana Airways and Nigeria Airways. It has already grown to a fleet of three Boeing 737-700s and four Bombardier Q400s. “Before ASKY, flying from Ghana to Conakry [in Guinea] has been a nightmare; from Bamako [in Mali] to Ouagadougou [in Burkina Faso] has also been a nightmare,” Gebremariam noted. “ASKY now is solving this problem. It is serving 22 destinations in the region.

“But also ASKY is serving as a second hub in Togo for Ethiopian Airlines,” he continued. “ASKY collects the traffic in Lomé from all the points in west Africa and then we carry long-haul traffic from Lomé via Addis to China, India, the Middle East and the rest of Asia.”

In a vote of confidence for Ethiopian’s strategy, the Star Alliance is now encouraging ASKY to add a second hub in Accra, Ghana. The alliance sees the city as an optimal ‘meeting point’ for its member carriers and ASKY. “We are examining that,” Gebremariam confirmed. “Preferably Lomé is the main hub, but the Ghanaian economy is growing stronger.”



ASKY is just one piece of the pan-African puzzle. In July, Ethiopian agreed to acquire 49% of defunct flag-carrier Air Malawi. It is planned that the southern African airline will be rebranded Malawian Airlines before resuming flights with one 737 and one Q400 around the time African Aerospace was going to press.

The fleet will then grow to about 10 aircraft within five years.

Despite its planned focus on regional services, wide-bodies have not been ruled out for the affiliate. “A significant Malawian population lives in the UK,” Gebremariam noted. “So we [Ethiopian] or Malawian Airlines may also fly from Lilongwe to London.”

The fourth and final hub is being planned for central Africa, but talks are only at the “initial discussion stage”. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the most likely home base for the venture, although Congo Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon will also be considered.

Turning to the fleet, the chief executive said that commonality remains the priority. Ethiopian’s predominantly Boeing fleet consists of 18 737s, 13 767s, nine 757s, nine 777s, four 787s, nine Q400s and two McDonnell-Douglas MD-11Fs. The 757s and 767s are being phased out.

Ethiopian received the first of four 777-300ERs in October, and it is standing by its

SOMMAIRE

Ethiopian Airlines toujours en pointe

Ethiopian Airlines compte bien poursuivre sa croissance en Afrique et à travers le monde. Son directeur général, Tewolde Gebremariam, a communiqué à Martin Rivers la stratégie du transporteur national à connecter l’Afrique au reste du monde.

Les décideurs politiques concèdent que le transport aérien jouera un rôle déterminant dans la croissance et la pérennité économique en Afrique. Il existe toutefois encore de nombreux obstacles (bureaucratie, corruption ou encore protectionnisme) pour exploiter tout son potentiel. Les gouvernements africains tardent également à libéraliser, assouplir les règlements et les accords bilatéraux.

Ethiopian Airlines fait figure d’exception dans cet univers. Elle a augmenté son chiffre d’affaires de 700% depuis 2005 et prévoit de multiplier par cinq ses activités d’ici 2025. L’ensemble de la flotte de Star Alliance pourrait doubler pour atteindre 120 avions.

« Le gouvernement considère le transport aérien comme un atout stratégique et a investi dans les aéroports à travers le pays », affirme Tewolde Gebremariam. « Nous gérons notre croissance en interne. Si la compagnie n’est pas rentable, elle ne continuera pas à être aussi attractive pour les investisseurs et crédateurs. »

A ce jour, Ethiopian Airlines représente à ce jour 58% de la capacité directe entre l’Afrique et la Chine laissant Kenya Airways en seconde position avec seulement 12%.

« Notre priorité est de développer notre propre hub de même que nos routes vers la Chine continentale », souligne Tewolde Gebremariam. « Nous étudions également des destinations comme Tokyo, Manille et Singapour. »

Le réseau d’Ethiopian Airlines compte désormais 77 destinations internationales réparties sur cinq continents.

Selon Tewolde Gebremariam, Los Angeles et Chicago sont à l’étude en Amérique du Nord. Moscou et d’autres villes en Australie pourraient également intégrer le réseau. Ces nouvelles routes ne seront

pas nécessairement connectées directement à Addis-Abeba. En investissant dans des nouvelles compagnies comme ASKY, Ethiopian Airlines poursuit un modèle «multi-hub» qui renforce sa connectivité à travers l’Afrique. Ces projets à capitaux mixtes font partie d’une stratégie s’inscrivant dans son plan «Vision 2025».

Ethiopian Airlines a conclu un accord en juillet dernier pour acquérir 49% du capital de la défunte compagnie Air Malawi. Ce nouveau transporteur, rebaptisé Malawi Airlines, compte reprendre ses vols avec un Boeing 737 et un Q400. Sa flotte pourra atteindre environ 10 avions d’ici cinq à ans. La mise en place d’un quatrième hub est prévue en Afrique centrale. Les négociations ne sont qu’à un stade initial.



La rationalisation de la flotte d’Ethiopian Airlines reste la priorité pour son directeur général. La compagnie a reçu le premier des quatre B777-300ER en octobre dernier et maintient ses engagements pour huit B787. Elle a commandé 12 Airbus A350 et compte y ajouter pour l’instant des B737, Q400, B787, B777 et l’A350.

Selon Tewolde Gebremariam, l’Afrique prendra livraison de plus de 750 avions pendant les 10 à 20 prochaines années. L’investissement direct de l’étranger en Afrique conduira à une demande importante en termes de services, de connectivité et de mobilité. L’Afrique sera-t-elle prête du point de vue infrastructurel? Une autre question pertinente s’impose : Le reste de l’Afrique suivra-t-il le modèle d’Ethiopian Airlines? Ce qui est sûr, c’est que la compagnie suit résolument une stratégie bien ficelée brassant les cinq continents.

commitments for eight more 787s, despite the type’s difficulties. It has also ordered 12 Airbus A350s.

“Definitely we need a variety of fleet models because we are a global carrier, but we are very disciplined in terms of fleet commonality,” Gebremariam said. “For now it will be just adding numbers on the 737, the Q400, the 787, the 777 and the A350.” Although Ethiopian is evaluating the upcoming A320neo, he strongly hinted that Boeing’s 737 MAX would be the preferred next-generation choice. The carrier has ruled out mixing types within the medium-range narrow-body fleet.

“More than 750 aircraft are coming to the continent in the next 10-20 years,” Gebremariam concluded.

“The foreign direct investment that is coming to Africa will drive huge demand for aviation services, connectivity and mobility. So the question now is will Africa be ready with its infrastructure?”

The jury is still out on that issue, but few observers would suggest that Addis Ababa lags behind in preparedness. Indeed, a more pertinent question – were Gebremariam not too modest to pose it – might ask whether the rest of Africa will follow Ethiopia’s example.

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*With a population of just under 170 million, set to grow to 440 million by 2050, Nigeria is the seventh most populated country in the world. Many airlines have tried and failed to tap this market – which holds half the population of the United States – but former Camair-Co CEO Alex Van Elk tells **Victoria Moores** that he believes he has a model that will work...even though the project branding is still under wraps.*

The man with no name...

"If there is one country in west Africa suited to starting an airline, it is Nigeria. Many countries in Africa want to start their own airline but they don't have a population that wants to fly to other places," said former Camair-Co CEO Alex Van Elk.

Around 18 months ago, Van Elk was wrapping up his contract at Camair-Co and looking forward to putting his feet up for a well-earned rest. "I was thinking about early retirement, about taking some time to enjoy the beach, but it turned out to be quite boring," he revealed. "Then I was called by French investment bank Afrinext Finance and asked whether I would like to set up a low-cost airline project in Nigeria."

With this, Van Elk joined the club of airline executives who simply cannot resist a new challenge – and this definitely ranks as a challenge.



Nigeria has seen more than its fair share of airline failures, including established operators Nigeria Airways, Bellview Airlines and Virgin Nigeria, which was later rebranded as Nigerian Eagle Airlines.

"We will be different to other airlines," said Van Elk. "The mistake is to buy old aircraft relatively cheaply and hire a lot of staff. Buying aircraft is the easiest part of starting an airline and older aircraft are very high maintenance. We will operate a very young fleet, with a maximum age of five years. What we are planning is a modified low-cost carrier, adapted to Africa's high cost environment."

Van Elk is currently drafting what he refers to as a conservative and solid business plan, with a view to launching low-cost Airbus A319 operations this summer.

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Alex Van Elk:
"We will be different to other airlines. We will operate a very young fleet, with a maximum age of five years."



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“I cannot and will not reveal the name yet because this will form part of our momentum. The name will be something totally different. We have already secured our domain name and it is something perfect for marketing. Our aim for the future is to make a brand which spans beyond the airline industry that we might be able to expand into other activities.”

This, as yet unnamed, airline will initially operate two A319s, growing to 12 aircraft by year five. “We chose Airbus because Boeing is already in with the major operators in west Africa and Airbus wants to get into the market. We have been talking with Airbus and they have been able to make us a much better offer than Boeing. The A319 is very reliable and has lots of belly capacity, which is good for the Nigerian market.”

The A319s will be laid out in an all-economy configuration and Van Elk stresses that cabin maintenance will be a priority. “We will keep the interior of the aircraft in good condition. If the cabin is taped together, what passengers see is what they believe. The aircraft must be in good condition inside and out.”

Van Elk considered basing the start-up in Abuja, but instead settled on Lagos, after being lured in by its 18 million population. His carrier will be based in either Lagos’ general aviation or MM2 domestic terminal.



“In the first year, we will only operate domestic routes. This is because we want to establish our name and demonstrate to people that, apart from being punctual, we will also offer excellent customer service. We will serve the golden triangle – Lagos, Abuja and Port Harcourt. These three destinations have a shortage of 700,000 seats a year.”

Distribution will be multi-channel, via the internet and IATA-approved travel agencies. Van Elk is planning to use a small-web reservations-based system, which will still be able to communicate with the majors, but at a fraction of the cost. “Major reservations systems are very expensive. Everything you do costs money, every button that you push costs money.” Likewise, the “important, very complex and delicate” art of revenue accounting will be outsourced, avoiding the risk of fraud and high staff training costs.

“We have reached an agreement with one of the major banks in Nigeria and Africa to handle funds, which means that someone can make a reservation, go to the bank and get a printout of their e-ticket. That creates a huge distribution system, because the bank we are talking about is everywhere. You can book in an internet cafe and go to the bank to pay. Because of all this, we can start with lower numbers of staff.”

Fares will be competitive, based on the venture’s low-overhead costs, but they will not sink to Ryanair levels, as this would not be sustainable. On the day of travel, the start-up will have a strict policy on check-in times, similar to



“Even if passengers come into Nigeria on a business class seat, then I don’t see a problem in flying the last hour in a properly-served economy seat.”

ALEX VAN ELK

European low-cost carriers, and excess luggage will be charged at a moderate rate. Once on board, passengers will be given a small bottle of water and a sweet on take-off, but any other refreshments will be buy-on-board.

Van Elk says there are some “very, very interesting” partnership talks with other airlines going on, although it is too early to give details. He is keen to strike an agreement with airlines serving Nigeria, where his venture could provide domestic and regional feed.

“Even if passengers come into Nigeria on a business class seat, then I don’t see a problem in flying the last hour in a properly-served economy seat. When I was in Cameroon, I often flew Air France business class to Paris, where I would switch to KLM short-haul business class to Amsterdam. You get a different meal. That’s it. It is more important that people can rely on safety in the last part of their journey. That is why we will start work towards our IATA IOSA certification straight away.”

A strong safety culture forms the backbone of

Van Elk’s plan and the new airline will operate to EASA and FAA standards. The airline’s maintenance will be performed by smaller, Part 145-approved suppliers to keep costs down, while assuring a safe operation.

“Many airlines just want an air operator’s certificate (AOC). They don’t care about the EU blacklist because they don’t want to fly to Europe. This is a big mistake. If you want major corporate accounts, it is a big issue. That is where we come in with an airline operated to European safety standards. This is why we may be able to secure interline agreements with bigger airlines. We would be willing to book passengers for them and if they sell our tickets too, then that’s great. I know it won’t happen overnight – I understand that – but it is something that we are working on already.”

Van Elk acknowledges that securing an AOC and subsequent IOSA approval in time to launch operations next summer is a tight schedule. Setting up an AOC from scratch will take six-to-nine months, while taking over an existing AOC would reduce the timeline to five-to-six months.



“We are looking at all options. If you use an existing AOC, you don’t have to do as much paperwork, but you have to make changes, which take months. Also, the AOC has to be FAA and EASA compliant. If there is [an existing AOC] available, of course it would help, but nothing comes for free and buying or hiring one costs an enormous amount of money. The team has experience in getting an AOC so there’s no real need to do that.”

Van Elk will most likely be CEO of the new airline. “I want to see that things are built up properly, especially during the start-up phase,” he said. “I have been in west Africa for the last seven years, so I know the tricks and traps. I will be taking a small equity share in the airline as well.”

He has already assembled a tentative management team, which includes experienced international expats and one executive who is already active in the Nigerian travel and leisure sector. This group would cover the key functions, such as director of flight operations, maintenance director and financial director. “Getting the people

wrong can cost a lot of money, so I am looking at a start-up team of four to five people. All of them have experience with obtaining an AOC, starting a maintenance operation and setting up commercial activities.”

The venture needs to secure \$25 million in start-up capital to cover the launch and any losses in the first three years. Van Elk says he is still seeking a small part of that funding.

“We have already secured a lot of the things we need in the start-up phase. When we talk to investors, they ask how we will succeed, but once they see the business plan they understand what we are doing and how we are making major changes. We will move into a profit by year three, most likely sooner. That is based on a 40% load factor to start with, moving up to 70%. I kept the initial load factor quite low, at around 40%, which is way, way below the potential, but I want to see a

smile on the investors’ faces. We will be a debt-free airline with no interest payments. Investors will simply put money in and ask for a return.”

Between years three and five, Van Elk is hoping to float the company, but he accepts that the airline must first have a proven track record and demonstrate to investors that it has a sustainable future.

Van Elk says the start-up has the full support of the Nigerian minister for aviation and he is very positive about the country’s aviation oversight. “If you look at the Nigerian authorities, they are really aiming to have a safe aviation environment. They only interfere when they see things going wrong, such as a lack of maintenance, supervision or security. On many occasions, airlines are doing the right things, but they fail to do the correct paperwork and if it is not on paper, it does not exist. This is why some airlines are blacklisted in Europe. You have to do a good job, a proper job and put it on paper and audit correctly.”



He is also undaunted by other start-up plans in the country, including those to create a new government-backed national carrier, saying this is more of a threat to established carriers operating a two-class long-haul product, like Arik Air.

“We will never, ever fly intercontinental. After a year, we might start looking at regional flights, providing the business case stacks up, but we will not fly to Europe. It is better to have a good partnership than a bad route, which burns fuel like crazy and eats up 40% of your costs. Lagos-Dakar is 3.5 hours, but we would only do it if there was a market. If we’re only going to carry 40 passengers, let other people do that because we don’t want to burn the fuel.”

“We will never, ever fly intercontinental. After a year, we might start looking at regional flights.”
Alex Van Elk

One competitor threatening to break into the Nigerian market is FastJet, which has formed a partnership with Abuja-based holding company Red 1 Airways, paving the way for the creation of FastJet Nigeria.

“If you read the news, you can see that FastJet has challenges in the Tanzanian operation. They have signed a memorandum of understanding

with Red 1, which has been working on a business plan for 10 years. That, in itself, is quite a long time. Also, they are looking at low-cost MD-80 operations – and if there is one aircraft not suited to that, it is the MD-80 because of fuel and maintenance costs. They also said they would go to as little as 30-60% of existing fares, but with fares of \$90-100 that is impossible. You can’t operate an aircraft for a \$30 fare on a one-hour sector, especially an MD-80. I wish them luck and hope they succeed.”

Returning to where we started, with a population of just under 170 million, there should be plenty of passengers to go around.

Suite à la disparition d'Air Afrique en 2002, un projet de compagnie aérienne a été initié par les six pays de la Communauté Economique et Monétaire d'Afrique Centrale (CEMAC). Cette compagnie appelée AIR CEMAC devait ainsi permettre de disposer d'un outil de transport aérien régional. Air CEMAC n'a toujours pas, à ce jour, pris son envol.

Vincent Chappard a tenté d'y voir un peu plus clair.

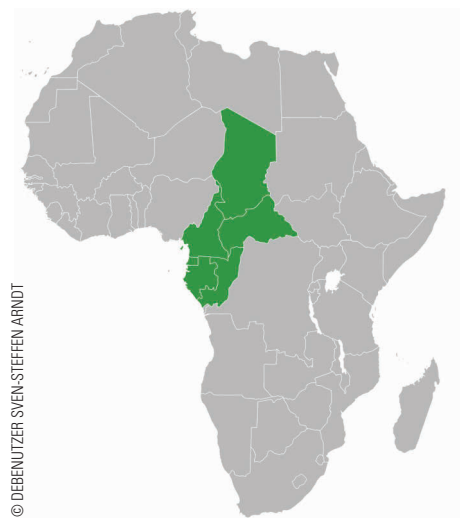
AIR CEMAC: MYTHE OU RÉALITÉ

«Air CEMAC: Myth or reality?» – Page 35

Cela fait dix années que l'on attend et annonce le décollage d'Air CEMAC. Cette compagnie régionale a en effet pour vocation de relier les capitales des pays composant la Communauté Economique et Monétaire d'Afrique Centrale (CEMAC) incluant le Cameroun, le Congo, le Gabon, la Guinée Equatoriale, la République centrafricaine et le Tchad. Elle devrait également desservir une vingtaine de capitales africaines et six métropoles européennes.

Le constat est aujourd'hui sans appel : il existe encore un flou autour de la stratégie, des partenariats, de la flotte et ou encore du réseau d'Air CEMAC. Qu'en est-il réellement ?

La mise en place de cette compagnie aérienne régionale est pourtant au cœur des objectifs et de la volonté exprimée par des chefs d'Etats et de gouvernements de l'Afrique Centrale. Au sein de la Commission de la CEMAC, le département en charge de ce dossier estime avoir déjà franchi plusieurs étapes. Il a assuré le suivi de la mise en place de la structure d'Air CEMAC ainsi que la mise en œuvre d'un accord relatif à la sûreté de l'aviation civile et du code de l'aviation civile des états membres. Ces formalités ont abouti à la constitution légale de la société en 2010. Son siège, situé à Brazzaville (République du Congo), a été inauguré en avril 2012. Le projet d'accord d'assistance technique relatif au



lancement des premiers vols a été obtenu en juillet 2012 lors d'un sommet des chefs d'Etats. Il en est de même concernant la poursuite des négociations avec la compagnie Air France pour une collaboration technique voire stratégique.

Même si la structure d'Air CEMAC est en place pour fonctionner, Il reste pour la compagnie à se constituer entre autres un capital, un partenariat, une certification, une

flotte d'avions afin de lancer ses opérations. Il existe à ce jour des discussions actives entre les pays de la CEMAC et Air France.

Rappelons qu'Air CEMAC a essuyé plusieurs refus lors de négociations similaires avec entre autres Royal Air Maroc (RAM) ou encore avec South African Airways (SAA). Le savoir-faire et les moyens de RAM avaient pourtant convaincu les autorités de la CEMAC en 2005 pour être son partenaire.

Air CEMAC a également rompu tout accord stratégique avec South African Airways, les deux parties n'ayant pas trouvé de consensus sur la base d'opérations d'Air CEMAC.

Alfred Bouba-Dalambaye, directeur général d'Air CEMAC, a tenu à préciser deux points essentiels sur l'actualité de la compagnie au magazine African Aerospace. « Air CEMAC est en plein processus de certification (LEA et CTA) auprès de l'autorité du Cameroun, désignée par les Etats Membres de la CEMAC. Elle est également en pourparler avec Air France pour finaliser un partenariat stratégique. »

Air France nous a également confirmé que des négociations étaient en cours avec Air CEMAC. Selon un porte-parole d'Air France, « il existe une forte demande en matière de transport aérien régional pour des vols entre les états de la CEMAC mais également entre la CEMAC et le reste de l'Afrique. Cette demande devrait



« Air CEMAC est en plein processus de certification (LEA et CTA) auprès de l'autorité du Cameroun, désignée par les Etats Membres de la CEMAC. Elle est également en pourparler avec Air France pour finaliser un partenariat stratégique. »

ALFRED BOUBA-DALAMBAYE

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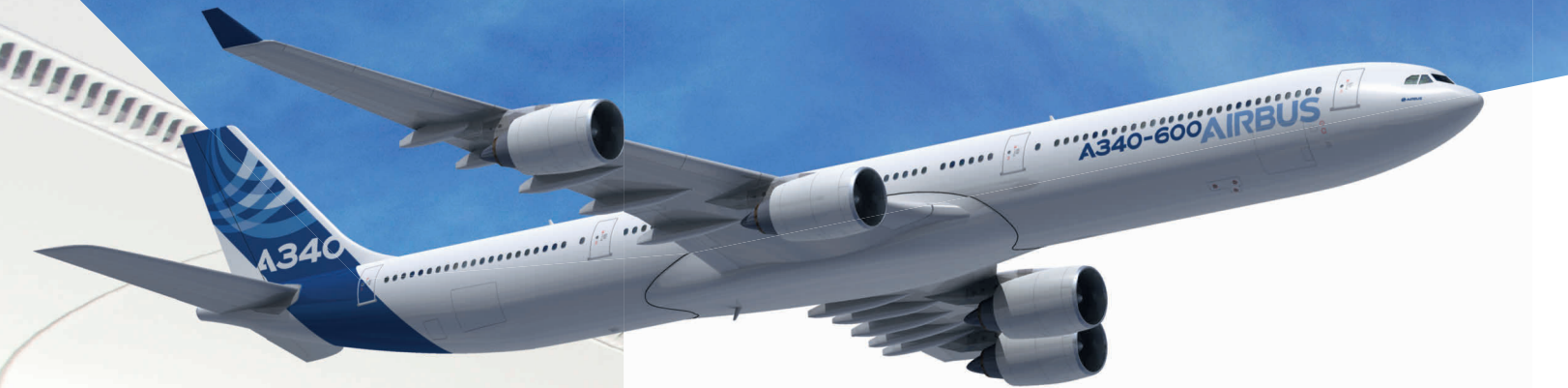
continuer à croître en raison du dynamisme économique de ces pays et de leurs importantes ressources. Air France travaille de manière constructive avec les six états concernés sur le projet de création d'Air CEMAC. La forme précise de ce partenariat avec Air France et les délais dans lesquels Air CEMAC verra le jour, sont à l'étude et en cours de négociation ».

Selon plusieurs sources, Air France pourrait obtenir entre 30 et 40% du capital d'Air CEMAC.

Les six états de la CEMAC disposeraient quant à eux de 5% du capital et le reste serait partagé entre la Banque des Etats de l'Afrique centrale et à des opérateurs privés. Même si la CEMAC a fait part « de voir aboutir les négociations avec le partenaire stratégique », celles-ci avanceraient difficilement en réalité. Il serait question pour le partenaire stratégique et Air CEMAC de disposer d'un monopole pour assurer les routes régionales. Pierre Moussa, président de la Commission de la CEMAC depuis septembre 2012, s'est exprimé sur le sujet en novembre dernier lors d'un entretien au journal Jeune Afrique : « Les chefs d'Etat se sont dits favorables à Air CEMAC, mais sans monopole. Air France, certainement soucieux de la viabilité de la nouvelle compagnie, désireait sinon l'exclusivité, du moins une place

Continuer à
la page 35

The A340 can be considered an efficient long-haul solution in today's market.



A340 Providing efficient lift for the long-haul

Could the A340 be a solution for airlines looking to make headway in an expanding market?

When it first entered service, the A340 opened true long-haul operations, expanding the Airbus wide-body family. The A330 and A340 have since become the best-selling wide-body family of all time.

In an ever-changing world some flag carriers like to keep their fleet age very low, it's natural that a proportion of their aircraft will move to the used aircraft market, the A340 is no exception.

The A340 Family of three variants, the A340-300, -500 and -600, is now available at very competitive lease rates which makes them economically affordable prospects for carriers looking at long-haul opportunities, especially as they await delivery of new-generation aircraft, such as the A350 XWB.

A340 appeal

The A340 appeal is based on its availability, commonality with other Airbus types, its performance as well as its excellent payload accommodation.

Now that older B747-400s are well into their retirement phase, the availability of significantly younger A340-600s equipped with modern avionics, make them the smart interim upgrade.

The four-engined A340 is not subject to "Extended-range Twin-engine Operations" (ETOPS). Operators can fly the most direct routes and operate efficiently from 'hot and high' airports, potentially off-limits to other aircraft. Furthermore, the A340 fits seamlessly alongside other Airbus aircraft, especially the twin-engined A330, with which it shares the same modern technology, such as the cockpit, fly-by-wire architecture and systems.

The A340 cabin can comfortably accommodate from 280 to 440 passengers depending on the model. Most A340s available in the market today are fitted with full Audio-Video-On-Demand (AVOD) IFE system in all classes, which is today's standard. Moreover, when it comes to making the most of cargo revenue opportunities, the A340 can carry as much cargo as direct competitors if not more, with 18 to 25 tonnes of revenue earning cargo capacity.

The bottom line

So, has the A340 performed as intended by its designers? The answer is definitely 'yes' because today's A340 is a mature product delivering high reliability.

With its very competitive ownership costs, its passenger and cargo revenues, its availability and its comfortable cabin, the A340 can be considered an efficient long-haul solution in today's market.

More information on www.airbus.com





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prépondérante sur le marché aérien de la sous-région. Par ailleurs, les autorités d'Air CEMAC souhaitent que la société française prenne une part de capital. »

Cette question du monopole semble générer de nombreuses tensions car de nombreux pays estiment que cela se fera au détriment des compagnies nationales en activité ou en voie de création dans les six pays membres de la CEMAC. L'éventualité d'intégrer les compagnies nationales existantes à la nouvelle structure d'Air CEMAC provoque également des réticences de la compagnie Camair-Co dont les autorités ont clairement affiché leur détermination à redresser le transporteur aérien.



Les parties concernées s'interrogent également sur l'avenir de la compagnie EC Air. Le lancement de la compagnie Toumaï Air Tchad qui vise un marché régional et international (vers le Moyen-Orient), semble aussi mettre Air CEMAC au second plan. Air Gabon envisage de créer « Air Gabon international » avec le soutien d'un partenaire de premier ordre.

Il existe une autre problématique pour Air CEMAC. La compagnie ne possède pas, à ce jour, d'avions pour lancer ses opérations.

Air CEMAC semble être un beau projet d'intégration régionale dans le domaine du transport aérien entre les 6 pays constituant la CEMAC. Toutefois, il semble difficile à ce stade de développer à la fois une compagnie régionale - il existe de belles réussites dans le monde - et de préserver les intérêts des transporteurs nationaux. Sans décisions politiques adéquates, de moyens significatifs et d'un partenariat solide, Air CEMAC risque de demeurer une compagnie fantôme alors que les potentiels de développement dans le secteur aérien sont bien réels.

SUMMARY

Air CEMAC: myth or reality?

There has been a surge of interest in the concept of Air Cemac – a consolidated airline from the six countries of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) – but, asks Vincent Chappard, how close is this to reality?

It has been more than 10 years since the demise of Air Afrique in 2002 but, since then, there has been an on-going discussion about consolidated air transport between the CEMAC countries of Cameroon, the Republic of Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, the Central African Republic, and Chad.

The CEMAC commission has already gone some way to establishing a framework for the airline but there has been problems in creating something concrete with foreign partner airlines outside of the CEMAC group.

The commission envisages an airline that will serve up to 20 African capitals and six European cities.

Alfred Bouba-Dalambaye, CEO of Air Cemac, said: "Air Cemac is in the process of certification with the authority of Cameroon, designated by member states of CEMAC. It is also in talks with Air France to finalise a strategic partnership."

Air France also confirmed that negotiations were under way. According to a spokesman: "There is a strong demand for regional airline flights between states, but also between CEMAC and the rest of Africa."

This demand will continue to grow due to the economic dynamism of these countries and their resources.

"Air France is working constructively with the six states involved in the project to create Air Cemac. The precise form this partnership with Air France and the time within which Air Cemac will emerge, are under consideration and negotiation."

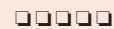
According to several sources, Air France could get between 30 and 40% of Air Cemac capital. The six

states of CEMAC would have a 5% stake and the rest would be shared between the Bank of Central African States and private investors.

But there is still a way to go.

Moroccan national carrier Royal Air Maroc (RAM) got very close to a deal in 2005, offering aircraft and technical services.

A potential follow-up with South African Airways (SAA) was also grounded after the two sides failed to reach a consensus on the Air Cemac base of operations.



The Air France agreements seem to be further advanced but, with no aircraft in the deal, the absence of equipment raises doubts.

Talking about Air CEMAC in an interview with Jeune Afrique, CEMAC Commission president, Pierre Moussa said: "Heads of government support Air CEMAC without a monopolistic situation on air transport market. Air France which is certainly concerned by the viability of the new company, would like at least, a prominent place on the market in the region."

There is also growing objection from some governments concerning the future and an eventual integration within Air CEMAC of existing carriers such as Camair (Cameroon) and ECAir (Congo). Furthermore, the launch of Air Gabon International, with a strategic partner, and Chad's proposal to Air Toumaï to serve Middle East connections, could also threaten the deal.

The Sukhoi Superjet 100 (SSJ100) is adding a new ingredient to the regional airliner marketplace. Alan Dron asks whether its combination of advanced technology, cabin space, and Western involvement in both construction and marketing, can win orders in Africa?

Superjet sits neatly in African market

«Superjet souhaite monter en puissance en Afrique» – Page 38

As recently as the 1980s, it was not difficult to pick out the products of the Soviet Union's airliner industry at airports around the world. They had a distinctive appearance – intriguing aerodynamics, low-bypass ratio engines and undercarriages that looked capable of operating from a ploughed field, rather than a runway.

There was also a perception that Soviet airliners came with the handicap of poor after-sales service.

These are factors that Sukhoi Civil Aircraft Company (SCAC) aims to change. Its Superjet 100 (SSJ100) is entering service with increasing numbers of airlines in southeast Asia and Latin America, as well as in Russia and the CIS. And Africa is a market on which the company has set its sights.

Visually, the Sukhoi Superjet is indistinguishable from a Western airliner. It is a thoroughly modern aircraft. It includes the first application of fly-by-wire technology in a regional jet, a wide (five-abreast) cabin and a 'per-flight-hour' after-sales support programme, SuperCare, designed to solve the problem afflicting earlier-era Soviet types of patchy in-service support.

Italy-based SuperJet International (SJI) "was set up exactly for this reason, to offer the market similar – if not better – service [than Western manufacturers] and to help to overcome this perception about Russian aircraft", explained Svetlana Issaeva, SJI's deputy senior-vice president, commercial.

To meet this aim, SJI has set up a 24/7 call centre to cope with airlines' urgent requests for spares. At least as importantly, it has struck a deal with one of the most respected names in the aircraft maintenance industry.

SJI aims to support customers through a spares distribution warehouse at Frankfurt Airport in Germany, managed by Lufthansa Technik Logistik (LTL). "We have a partnership with Lufthansa Technik to be able to supply any spare parts within a very short period of time," said Issaeva.

SCAC is also determined to provide a new level of support to customers. In Moscow a couple of



years ago, this reporter put the question of after-sales service to top management at United Aircraft Corporation, the umbrella company that encompasses SCAC. They acknowledged that they were very aware of past problems and knew the situation had to improve. They had, for example, put in place new arrangements with Russian customs authorities, so that clearance for spares would be reduced from days or even weeks down to a matter of hours.



This quality of after-sales support will be vital to the SSJ100, says aviation analyst Richard Aboulafia, particularly in relation to Mexico's Interjet, which has just received the first of 30 it has on order.

"If Interjet gets quality planes and quick and responsive aftermarket service and is happy with their SSJs, that would be a nice endorsement," said Aboulafia, vice-president of analysis at the US-based Teal Group.

Referring to early complaints from lead customer

Armavia over the serviceability of the SSJ, he said it was possible that small airlines, like the now-defunct Armenian flag-carrier, had not adequately provisioned or maintained the new type. However, that excuse would not wash with Interjet. "The Mexicans are pros. It's just a question of whether the OEM can adequately support [the aircraft]."

When it entered service with Armavia in spring 2011, there were complaints about several faults, notably concerning the landing gear. Availability of the aircraft dropped as a result.

Perhaps unfairly, some commentators leapt on the problems as evidence that the Russian civil aircraft industry had not improved its performance. However, Sukhoi can reasonably point to the spectacular teething problems suffered by the Airbus A380 (cracked wing-rib brackets) and the Boeing 787 (overheating batteries) as evidence that even the world's most successful airliner manufacturers do not always get it right.

Apart from after-care, Venice-based SJI is also the marketing organisation for the SSJ100 for Africa. And Issaeva believes there are good opportunities for the aircraft in the continent.



Discussions are on-going with potential customers, notably in southern and west Africa.

Are sales likely this year? “We’re working really hard to make it happen. There is definitely demand in this continent for regional jets. And, with the SSJ100 entering service with increasing numbers of customers elsewhere in the world, interest in it is growing,” she said.

“Not only does an aircraft like the SSJ100 overcome the continent’s traditional road infrastructure problems,” she said, “but also the growth of aviation means that airlines are developing hubs in several African capitals. There will be a need to feed these hubs with regional flights, which means regional aircraft will be in demand very soon.

“The SSJ100’s ‘hot-and-high’ performance should help it win customers in Africa,” she added.

Sukhoi believes that a major SSJ100 advantage over rivals is the amount of internal space it offers, bringing mainline jet levels of comfort to regional jet operations.

Africans like to bring a lot of luggage with them and the SSJ100 offers considerably greater

overhead baggage space than other regional jets, explained Issaeva. The wider fuselage, with its 3+2 seating, also alleviates the ‘tunnel effect’ found on narrower-fuselage competitors.

When it comes to costs, she said the SSJ100 would be “competitive” and that its levels of passenger comfort would be one of its biggest advantages when potential customers looked at the cost-benefit analysis.



In a previous era, if a western airliner’s list price was \$30 million and a Russian counterpart was \$25 million, that was a useful difference to an airline in regions such as Africa or parts of the Middle East. Differences in list prices are no longer as valid, said Aboulafia. “Today, you get somebody to finance it. This has become a game about third-party financing.”

He believes that SCAC may face severe competition from the second-hand aircraft market.

“If you’re really looking to save money, you go

with a depreciated asset like a [Bombardier] CRJ. Twenty years ago, you couldn’t get a used regional jet. Today, there’s a flood of used CRJs and Embraers out there. Ask anyone from Canada or Brazil what they are going to do with their surplus regional jets and [selling them to] Africa is high on the list.”

However, Issaeva believes that this image of Africa as a dumping ground for elderly airliners is outdated. “It’s an interesting question. Africa used to be the place for second-hand aircraft. That’s going to change. We see it changing inside the continent.”

With Africa projected to have one of the strongest growth rates for civil aviation over the next decade, and growing levels of pride on the continent, it is quite possible that airlines will opt for new aircraft in preference to old.

Although the 1990s saw several Russian airliners manufacturers trying to make their products more acceptable to a wider market by grafting on Western powerplants and avionics – with limited success – the Sukhoi design team that

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developed the SSJ100 in partnership with Italy's Alenia Aermacchi designed in Western components from the outset. The aim: to make the aircraft a more attractive proposition to markets that previously had not been attracted by Soviet-era designs.

With that aim in mind, Thales supplies the avionics, Messier-Dowty the landing gear, Honeywell the APU and Liebherr the flight control system. Goodrich, Hamilton Sundstrand and B/E Aerospace also contribute to the overall package.

The SaM 146 powerplants are the product of a joint venture between France's Snecma and Russia's Saturn. Significantly, SuperJet International is also a joint venture, adding Italian marketing flair from Alenia Aermacchi.

With these factors behind it, the SSJ100 is regarded as Russia's current best hope for breaking out into non-traditional markets for the country's civil aviation products.

Embraer's 'E-Jet' family and the forthcoming Bombardier CSeries will be the SSJ100's main rivals in the region, together with members of the Boeing 737 and Airbus A320 families.

SCAC believes that the SSJ100's fuel-burn will give it a substantial advantage over the latter two types, as well as over the E-190/195, which is a similar size to the Russian jet. Work is under way to improve further the SSJ100's fuel consumption to increase this advantage.



The aircraft is also designed to be sufficiently flexible to be able to substitute for single-aisle mainline jets on routes when demand is lower.

Sukhoi's range figures show that a SSJ100/95 basic version operating from Cairo, for example, could reach Algiers or Addis Ababa with its 3,100km range, while the SSJ100/95 Long Range variant's 4,600km reach would enable it easily to serve Dar Es Salaam.

SCAC has another string to its bow. The SSJ100 forms the basis for the Sukhoi Business Jet, an executive aircraft that in terms of size falls between the large, Gulfstream-type executive jets and the Boeing Business Jet.

Extra fuel tanks in the hold are designed to give a range of around 7,800km with eight passengers, more than double that of the standard airliner. This would give it the capability to reach London from Nairobi, for example. Indeed, this version, with substantial range, large cabin volume and low internal noise levels, could prove to be popular with entrepreneurs or as a VIP government transport. The range with 19 passengers – more than enough for a government minister and aides – is only slightly less than in executive configuration, at 7,400km.

The Russian Government sees the country's aviation industry as one of the major economic growth points that will allow it to diversify from extractive industries, such as gas and minerals. In the SSJ100 it has as good a chance as any to achieve that goal.

SOMMAIRE



Superjet souhaite monter en puissance en Afrique

Le Sukhoi Superjet 100 (SSJ100) vient bousculer le marché des jets régionaux. Cet avion bénéficie d'un concentré de technologies et d'une large cabine, d'une forte implication des industriels occidentaux en charge de sa commercialisation et de son marketing qui pourra peut être l'aider à décrocher un premier contrat en Afrique.

L'industrie des avions civiles russes a toujours bénéficié d'avancées technologiques et d'un design unique mais elle souffre d'une mauvaise réputation en termes de services après-vente. C'est une image que Sukhoi Civil Aircraft Company (SCAC) souhaite changer. Le SSJ100 bénéficie désormais d'un programme de support après-vente sur la base de l'heure de vol, « SuperCare », permettant de résoudre d'éventuels problèmes au plus tôt.

« SuperJet International* (SJI) a été créée pour offrir un service après-vente répondant au standard mondial », déclare Svetlana Issaeva, directrice adjointe commerciale de SJI.

La société a ainsi mis en place un centre d'appel 24/7 pour faire face aux demandes urgentes des compagnies aériennes en termes de pièces de rechange. Elle a également conclu des accords avec l'un des plus grands groupes de maintenance d'avions et souhaite également offrir un support efficace à ses clients via un centre de distribution à l'aéroport de Francfort en Allemagne. Il sera géré par Lufthansa Technik Logistik.

« La qualité du service après-vente sera vitale pour le SSJ100 et la compagnie mexicaine Interjet », avance Richard Aboulafia, analyste du secteur aéronautique. « Si Interjet reçoit des avions de qualité avec un service après-vente efficace et si elle témoigne sa satisfaction, ce sera une belle reconnaissance pour le SSJ100. »

L'entrée en service du SSJ100 chez Armavia en 2011 avait fait l'objet de plaintes portant sur plusieurs incidents en opération. Certains commentateurs avaient, peut-être injustement, dénoncé le manque de performance de l'industrie aéronautique civile russe. Toutefois SCAC peut, à juste titre, souligner les problèmes confrontés par les plus grands avionneurs comme le démarrage de l'Airbus A380 (fissure des ailes) et du Boeing 787 (surchauffe des batteries).

SCAC jette désormais son dévolu sur le marché

africain qui devrait enregistrer la plus forte croissance mondiale en matière d'aviation durant la prochaine décennie. Selon Svetlana Issaeva il existe de réelles opportunités pour le SSJ100. Des discussions sont en cours avec des clients potentiels en Afrique australe et en Afrique de l'ouest. Il y a un travail soutenu pour signer une première vente en 2014. L'entrée en service du SSJ100 dans un nombre croissant de compagnies aériennes en Russie, au sein de la CEI, en Asie du sud et en Amérique latine, suscite un vif intérêt en Afrique. Les compagnies développent des hubs dans plusieurs capitales africaines. Il y aura donc un besoin d'opérer des vols régionaux et par conséquent davantage d'avions de transport régional.

La Famille «E-Jet» d'Embraer et le CSeries de Bombardier sont les principaux rivaux du SSJ100 en Afrique. SCAC estime que le SSJ100 possède des avantages majeurs sur ses rivaux en termes de performance, de consommation de carburant et de confort passagers.

Richard Aboulafia estime que SCAC peut faire face à une forte concurrence venant du marché des avions d'occasion. Le prix de vente catalogue n'est plus un critère déterminant pour une compagnie aérienne africaine ou du Moyen-Orient mais plutôt son mode de financement.

SCAC a également une autre corde à son arc. Le SSJ100 constitue le socle pour le lancement du Sukhoi Business Jet, un avion d'affaires qui se situe, en termes de taille, entre un Gulfstream et le Boeing Business Jet.

Le gouvernement russe considère l'industrie aéronautique comme l'un des principaux secteurs de croissance économique qui permettra au pays de diversifier ses activités. Le SSJ100 est donc considéré comme un véritable porte-drapeau.

■ SuperJet International est un joint-venture entre Alenia Aermacchi (51%) and Sukhoi Holding (49%).



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Un nouveau lancement à faible

Le transport aérien tient une place primordiale dans le développement économique et touristique de l'océan Indien.

Le secrétaire général de la Commission de l'Océan Indien, Jean Claude de l'Estrac, aime à rappeler que « le tourisme est créateur d'emplois et de richesse pour les pays de la région. Elle est toutefois insuffisamment connectée avec le monde par rapport aux objectifs des états et il est temps de développer une meilleure connectivité dans ce secteur. » La création d'une nouvelle compagnie aérienne low-cost aux Seychelles reste une initiative intéressante. Elle a été confirmée par Ahmed Afif, consultant au sein d'Intershore Aviation Ltd et Robert Marie, formateur et ancien pilote militaire et civil, durant l'assemblée annuelle des principaux acteurs du tourisme seychellois en novembre dernier. Ils ont déposé le nom de Seychelles Airlines pour leur projet de compagnie aérienne. Les 2 initiateurs du projet travaillent sur sa mise en opération en juin 2014.

Seychelles Airlines devrait ainsi opérer des vols directs principalement vers l'Europe. Elle disposera d'un Boeing 767-300ER. Une certification de type ETOPS est prévue pour cet avion qui pourra transporter 243 passagers dont 30 en classe affaires.

« Seychelles Airlines adoptera les meilleures

Des informations sur le projet de création d'une nouvelle compagnie aérienne low-cost aux Seychelles ont été dévoilées lors de l'assemblée générale de l'association regroupant les acteurs touristiques de l'archipel, la SHTA. Ce nouveau transporteur initié par la société Intershore Aviation Ltd prévoit de débuter ses opérations en juin 2014. Un compte rendu de Vincent Chappard.

pratiques aéronautiques mondiales pour assurer durabilité, fiabilité et sécurité à ses opérations, » a déclaré Ahmed Afif.

La compagnie desservira des vols directs dans un premier temps vers la France, l'Italie et l'Allemagne. Elle prévoit également des routes vers le Royaume-Uni, la Russie, Singapour et l'Inde, dès réception d'un deuxième avion.

La SHTA soutient la création de cette nouvelle compagnie aérienne qui permettra la reprise d'un lien direct entre le pays et ses marchés européens (hormis Air France et Condor). Selon un communiqué de l'association, « le ministre du Tourisme des Seychelles, Alain Saint-Ange, et son homologue des Affaires intérieures et du Transport, Joël Morgan, ont soutenu publiquement ledit projet de même que l'idée du redémarrage des vols sans escale vers l'Europe. Le ministre Joël Morgan a même proposé que l'aviation civile seychelloise (SCAA) offre à la

nouvelle compagnie aérienne, une réduction de 50% des droits d'atterrissage pour ses 6 premiers mois d'opérations. »

Ahmed Afif a entamé la procédure de demande de la licence et du certificat de transporteur aérien (AOC) pour démarrer ses opérations en juin 2014. Des discussions sont en cours avec la SCAA et le ministère du Transport pour l'obtention d'une licence de transporteur aérien (ATL) ainsi que pour ses opérations au sol. Le processus de recrutement a débuté fin 2013 aux Seychelles et une campagne de promotion est prévue au premier trimestre 2014.

La compagnie Air Seychelles poursuit quant à elle sa stratégie de développement avec son partenaire stratégique Etihad. Air Seychelles a annoncé en novembre 2013, une hausse de 91% du nombre de passagers sur son service international au cours du troisième trimestre.

« Nous avons noté des performances solides



coût aux Seychelles?

sur l'ensemble de notre réseau avec une croissance soutenue sur tous nos marchés clés et une contribution forte et accélérée de nos partenaires en partage de codes. Avec une attention continue sur la maîtrise des coûts, nous sommes confiants que nous aurons un résultat financier intéressant pour nos actionnaires et pour l'économie nationale », déclare Cramer Ball, directeur général d'Air Seychelles.



Seychelles Airlines compte se concentrer sur des vols directs (Europe, Russie, Singapour et Inde) tandis qu'Air Seychelles effectue l'ensemble de ses vols (sauf les routes régionales) via Abu Dhabi, avec le support d'Etihad. L'aéroport international des Seychelles accueille les compagnies Air France, Air Seychelles, Condor, Emirates, Etihad et Kenya Airways.

Selon un porte-parole d'Air Seychelles, la compagnie ne prévoit pas d'opérer de vols directs depuis les Seychelles vers l'Europe à court terme et compte étoffer son offre et son réseau à l'international.

Simple coïncidence ou réaction face à la concurrence, Air Seychelles s'apprête à renforcer sa présence en France.

Elle prévoit de desservir l'aéroport de Paris-Orly dès février 2014, sous réserve des

autorisations nécessaires. Air Seychelles opérera deux vols par semaine entre Mahé et Paris-Orly, via une escale à Abu Dhabi. La compagnie aérienne va également étendre ses activités dans l'océan Indien à partir du dernier trimestre 2014.

Elle lancera des liaisons régionales vers Antananarivo (Madagascar) et La Réunion mais également vers Mumbai (Inde). Il n'y a pas de partage de codes sur ces destinations à ce jour mais la compagnie pourra éventuellement travailler avec des partenaires régionaux.

Le tourisme seychellois semble retrouver une embellie dans le sillage des prévisions de croissance du tourisme mondial.

La création d'une compagnie low-cost est une initiative louable pour consolider le développement du transport aérien dans la région.

Reste à savoir si le "business model" de Seychelles Airlines pourra trouver sa place dans l'océan Indien surtout avec les taxes et redevances aéroportuaires qui restent élevées. Il serait intéressant d'étudier, en dehors du critère de prix, le comportement des passagers en particulier européens, pour savoir s'ils préfèrent voyager aux Seychelles en vols directs (avec moins de fréquences mais plus rapidement) ou via d'Abu Dhabi (moins rapidement mais avec davantage de fréquences et de connexions).

SUMMARY

Seychelles to get new LCC

A new low-cost carrier, set to operate in the Seychelles, will be launched this summer. Vincent Chappard reports.

Ahmed Afif, a consultant at Intershore Aviation, and Robert Marie, a former military and civilian pilot and a flight instructor, have confirmed the creation of a new LCC for the Seychelles.

The proposed Seychelles Airlines is planning to launch in June and operate direct flights, mainly to Europe, with a Boeing 767-300ER.

With extended range twin operations (ETOPs) certification, the aircraft will carry 243 passengers with 30 in business class.

Afif, who has begun the process of applying for a licence and air operator's certificate (AOC), said the airline would initially fly direct to France, Italy and Germany. When a second aircraft joined the fleet, it would also provide routes to the United Kingdom, Russia, Singapore and India.

The Seychelles Hospitality & Tourism Association (SHTA) has welcomed the move, saying: "Seychelles tourism minister Alain St Ange and his counterpart in internal affairs and transport, Joel Morgan, publicly support the project." Morgan has also reportedly called on the Seychelles Civil Aviation Authority (SCAA) to offer the new airline a 50% reduction in landing fees for the first six months of operation. Discussions are on-going with the SCAA and the ministry of transport to licence the airline and its ground operations.

A recruitment process began in late 2013 in the Seychelles and a promotion campaign for the airline was due to start as *African Aerospace* was going to press.

The new airline will compete with Air Seychelles, which continues its development strategy with its strategic partner, Etihad.

Air Seychelles announced in November that it had seen a 91% increase in the number of passengers on its international service in the third quarter.

According to a spokesman, Air Seychelles does not plan to operate direct flights from the Seychelles to Europe. It will be expanding flights to France – but via Abu Dhabi. It competes in the European market with Emirates, via Dubai, and Kenya Airways, via Nairobi.

According to analysts, with Seychelles tourism set to grow, the creation of a low-cost airline is "a commendable initiative to consolidate the development of air transport in the region".

That was a point picked up by Jean Claude de l'Estrac, secretary general of the Indian Ocean Commission, who said: "Tourism creates jobs and wealth for the countries of the region. We are, however, insufficiently connected with the world and it is time to develop better connectivity in this area."

It remains to be seen whether the business model of the new Seychelles Airlines can find its place in the Indian Ocean, especially with taxes and airport charges so high. And the jury is still out on whether European passengers will prefer to travel to the Seychelles on direct flights, rather than via the Middle East.

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EWA prend son envol malgré quelques turbulences

«EWA off to a flying start despite row» – Page 45

*Air Austral, la Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Mayotte et la société Ylang Invest ont signé le 13 septembre 2013 un protocole d'accord d'investissement permettant le lancement officiel d'EWA, la première compagnie aérienne mahoraise. Elle a effectué son premier vol commercial après seulement 6 semaines. **Vincent Chappard** revient sur son lancement mouvementé et les ambitions de cette nouvelle compagnie régionale.*

EWA est née d'une volonté de mettre en place une compagnie aérienne à Mayotte avec des investisseurs mahorais tout en bénéficiant du savoir-faire et de l'expertise d'un transporteur comme Air Austral. EWA est détenue à 52,3% par Air Austral et à 47,7 % par la Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Mayotte (22,7%) et la société Ylang Invest (25 %).

La compagnie bénéficie d'un capital de 4,4 M€, les 3 partenaires d'EWA ayant procédé à la signature du protocole d'investissement officialisant le démarrage d'EWA en septembre dernier.

La signature de cet accord a été la pierre fondatrice d'EWA car c'est à compter de cette date que les partenaires ont entamé un marathon pour assurer son premier vol commercial même si le « business plan » a été monté en amont.

EWA a donc rapidement finalisé la mise en place de sa structure juridique (EWA Air) et obtenu de la direction générale de l'aviation civile française son certificat de transporteur pour exploiter des services aériens dans la région ainsi que sa licence d'exploitation.

Le premier vol de la nouvelle compagnie aérienne mahoraise était prévu le 29 octobre 2013 à destination de Moroni. Il a cependant été annulé car les autorités comoriennes ont refusé que l'ATR d'EWA se pose sur leur territoire. La riposte de la France (Mayotte étant un département français) ne s'est pas fait attendre, elle a à son tour interdit tout avion comorien de se poser sur son territoire. La liaison aérienne entre Mayotte et les Comores a ainsi été rompue pendant 20 jours et a provoqué par conséquent une véritable paralysie. De nombreux passagers sont restés bloqués à Mayotte et aux Comores. Signalons que

Continuer à
la page 44

SUIVE DE LA PAGE 43

les Comores ont une compagnie régionale appelée Inter Iles Air qui opère avec un SAAB 340 entre Mayotte et les trois autres îles de l'archipel comorien (Mohéli, Anjouan et Grande Comore). Elle se trouve en concurrence directe avec EWA. Les 2 compagnies ont travaillé conjointement pour parvenir à la reprise des vols. Le premier vol d'EWA Air vers Moroni a finalement eu lieu le 17 novembre dernier.

Pourquoi la compagnie mahoraise a-t-elle planifié des opérations vers Moroni sans avoir eu une autorisation préalable? Selon Air Austral, il fallu à un moment donné se fixer et lancer les opérations sachant qu'EWA n'avait reçu ni refus et ni accord des autorités comoriennes et que la compagnie réunionnaise Air Austral bénéficie déjà d'un accord avec les Comores et dessert l'archipel via La Réunion. Air Austral et sa filiale EWA ne pensaient à aucun moment qu'une telle situation surgirait.

En tout cas cette situation ayant surpris plus d'un a paralysé le transport aérien de la région et a mis sur le carreau de nombreux passagers en déplacement et en transit. Assmahane Ahmed Abdou, directrice adjointe chez Inter Iles Air, a d'ailleurs rapidement exprimé son inquiétude à la presse quant aux pertes et à l'impact de ces tensions.



La compagnie comorienne a eu la lourde tâche de trouver une solution de logement et d'acheminement pour ses clients. Elle opère jusqu'à 3 vols par jour au départ de Mayotte, et transporte environ 200 passagers par semaine. Marie-Joseph Malé, président directeur général d'Air Austral avait également déploré cette situation en estimant qu'elle pénalisait tout le monde et qu'il était dans l'intérêt des deux compagnies de sortir de l'impasse.

Une explication de cette situation rocambolesque a été cependant avancée par les spécialistes de la politique intérieure comorienne. Selon un proche du dossier, il s'agit en fait d'une « réciprocité exigée par la France pour qu'EWA sous pavillon français puisse opérer entre Mayotte et Anjouan ou Moroni au même titre qu'Inter Iles Air opère entre ces trois destinations. Toutefois, les choses se compliquent car cette compagnie est portée par des intérêts Anjouanais (Anjouan a un statut particulier, étant à la fois un état fédéré de l'Union des Comores de même qu'une île de l'archipel des Comores) et non de Grande Comore, ce qui par conséquent interpelle les autorités de Moroni sur le fait que Mayotte et Anjouan disposent d'une compagnie aérienne sans qu'il n'existe un transporteur aérien pour Grande Comore. »

La compagnie mahoraise a effectué, selon nos informations, son premier vol le 31 octobre 2013 vers Nosy Be (Madagascar). EWA opère avec un ATR 72-500. Cet avion provient de la flotte d'Air Austral et sera loué à la compagnie

Mayotte au cœur du canal du Mozambique

Mayotte est un département d'outre-mer français de l'océan Indien situé dans l'archipel des Comores, lui-même localisé dans le canal du Mozambique. Sa population s'élevait à 212 645 habitants en 2012. Mayotte constitue un archipel d'une vingtaine d'îles émergeant d'un immense lagon, l'un des plus grands et des plus beaux du monde. Il dispose d'une zone de protection de 70 000 km² et présente la particularité rare d'une double barrière récifale qui s'étend sur près de 157 kilomètres.

Constituant le principal accès à l'île de Mayotte, l'aéroport de Dzaoudzi-Pamandzi, représente un élément clé pour le développement du département. Avec plus de 300 000 passagers en 2012, l'aéroport de Mayotte connaît chaque année une croissance à deux chiffres. Il nécessitait par conséquent de nouvelles infrastructures pour répondre aux défis futurs de la croissance et de l'attractivité de Mayotte. Le tourisme mahorais augmente également chaque année avec plus de 70 000 arrivées touristiques en 2012.

L'aéroport de Mayotte modernise ainsi ses infrastructures sous l'impulsion de la société exploitante SNC-Lavalin Aéroports. De 2011 à 2013, une aire a été mise en place pour les opérations des Boeing 777-200ER. L'aéroport se dotera d'une nouvelle aérogare de 7800 m² au meilleur standard mondial afin de répondre à la croissance du nombre de passagers. La livraison du chantier est prévue pour la fin de l'année 2013 et son inauguration aura lieu en février 2014. La nouvelle aérogare sera donc dimensionnée pour accueillir 600 000 passagers par an, avec une possibilité d'extension future permettant d'atteindre jusqu'à 1,2 million de passagers. Une nouvelle tour de contrôle est prévue à l'horizon 2015-2016 ainsi qu'une nouvelle aire de trafic pour 2022-2023.

« Avec l'arrivée d'EWA à Mayotte, nous aurons désormais une ouverture vers la Corne de l'Afrique avec Pemba et Dar es Salaam. Nous avons l'ambition de nous étendre vers l'Afrique du Sud et d'attirer des vols de compagnies à bas coûts qui développent leurs activités dans cette région d'Afrique », soutient Daniel Lefebvre, directeur de la société d'exploitation de l'aéroport de Mayotte.

5 compagnies aériennes desservent actuellement l'aéroport de Dzaoudzi. Air Austral assure la plus grande fréquence quotidienne de vols via l'île de La Réunion. Corsairfly propose des vols directs Paris/Mayotte. Kenya Airways dessert Mayotte via Nairobi ainsi qu'Air Madagascar via Nosy Be ou Antananarivo. XL Airways assure également une desserte hebdomadaire via Marseille et La Réunion et désormais à travers la compagnie mahoraise EWA.



mahoraise. Son réseau sera déployé en 2 temps pour assurer 6 liaisons directes au départ de Dzaoudzi. Le plan de vol hebdomadaire d'EWA comporte 2 vols vers Moroni et 4 vols vers Anjouan. Concernant les dessertes sur l'Afrique, elle prévoit sur Madagascar dont 2 sur Nosy Be et 3 sur Majunga. EWA ouvrira en février 2014, ses routes vers La Tanzanie et le Mozambique. Elle desservira Pemba avec 2 vols et Dar es Salaam avec un vol. Ceux-ci seront opérés en partenariat avec la compagnie LAM, sous réserve d'approbation gouvernementale. Les discussions sont toujours en cours au moment où le magazine va sous presse.



La création d'une compagnie régionale basée à Mayotte a déjà traversé l'esprit de bon nombre d'acteurs du secteur aérien et ce n'est donc pas une idée nouvelle. Air Austral a cependant estimé que c'était le moment de réaliser ce projet. EWA dispose d'une bonne structure et d'un dispositif adéquat pour réussir ses opérations dans la région malgré le contexte économique difficile. Le support et l'expertise d'Air Austral constituent également pour les futurs voyageurs, une garantie en termes de qualité de services et de sécurité.

EWA a recruté 20 personnes pour assurer ses activités. On compte 4 agents administratifs et 3 techniciens sur site. EWA a également constitué 3 équipages composés de 6 PNT et 6 PNC

Aéroport de Mayotte .

Inset: the first ATR72-500 for EWA leased from Air Austral.



recrutés à Mayotte. Les opérations au sol sont sous traitées. EWA est supervisée par un conseil d'administration dont le président est Marie-Joseph Malé et un nouveau directeur général délégué en la personne de Jean-François Devaux. Ce dernier possède plus de 35 ans d'expérience dans le transport aérien notamment en Afrique. Il a été directeur général délégué de Gabon Airlines.

Mayotte est également un territoire en pleine croissance et les besoins de déplacement au niveau régional sont réels. EWA a donc pour mission d'y répondre. Dar es Salaam et Pemba sont 2 destinations prometteuses pour la compagnie mahoraise et représentent 2 hubs importants dans cette région d'Afrique. La région du canal du Mozambique connaît actuellement un fort développement et devient de plus en plus attractive avec en particulier avec la découverte d'importants gisements gaziers.

« Nous sommes très fiers de pouvoir

contribuer, à travers EWA, à l'ouverture du département et à son rayonnement régional. EWA va jouer un rôle stratégique pour le désenclavement et le développement de Mayotte ainsi que pour son ancrage dans le canal du Mozambique », a déclaré Marie-Joseph Malé, président d'EWA.

Air Austral estime à 87 000 le nombre annuel de passagers pour le marché régional au départ de Mayotte. Le cœur du marché d'EWA se concentre principalement aux Comores et à Madagascar.

Ce sont des destinations qui existent déjà et elles étaient proposées par Air Austral. Ces routes vont être en partie transférées à la nouvelle compagnie mahoraise.

La compagnie EWA souhaite ainsi rapidement assoir son positionnement et consolider son réseau dans la région d'Afrique où le transport aérien reste un élément indispensable pour tout développement économique et touristique.

SUMMARY

EWA off to a flying start despite row

Just six weeks after the signing of an investment MoU in September, EWA Air – the new carrier for Mayotte – began operations from the French-governed island... and stepped straight into a diplomatic row. Vincent Chappard reports.

A row over landing rights for the new EWA Air not only caused a postponement of its inaugural flight, but also shut down the air link between Mayotte and Comoros for 20 days.

As reported in the last *African Aerospace*, Air Austral, the Mayotte Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and investment firm Ylang backed the launch of the new airline.

EWA is 52.3% owned by Air Austral, 22.7% by the Chamber of Commerce, and 25% by Ylang.

The carrier quickly completed the implementation of its legal structure and obtained an AOC from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation to operate air services in the region.

The first flight of the new airline was expected at the end of October from Mayotte to Moroni. However, the flight was cancelled because the Comorian authorities refused landing permission for EWA's ATR aircraft.

The response of France was, in turn, to ban Comoros aircraft from landing on its territories. The air link between Mayotte and Comoros was broken for 20 days and caused a major paralysis, with many passengers stranded in Mayotte and Comoros.

There were internal political conflicts over the three islands of the Comoros archipelago (Mohéli, Anjouan and Grande Comore). Only Anjouan has its own regional airline, Inter Island Air, which operates with a SAAB 340 between Mayotte and the other three islands of the Comoros in direct competition with EWA.

The two companies worked together to achieve the resumption of flights and the first flight of EWA Air to Moroni finally took place on November 17.

But EWA had not been standing still and, on October 31, it made its maiden flight from Mayotte to Nosy Be in Madagascar.

Assmahane Ahmed Abdou, assistant director at Inter Island Air, expressed concern about the losses and the impact of the tensions. The Comorian carrier operates up to three flights a day from Mayotte and carries about 200 passengers per week.

Marie-Joseph Malé, president and CEO of Air Austral, also said he deplored the situation, adding that it penalised everyone and that it was in the interest of both companies to break the deadlock.

EWA is leasing an Air Austral ATR 72 for its operations. It will be deployed on two weekly flights to Moroni and four flights to Anjouan, as well as two flights to Nosy Be and three to Mahajanga.

In February, EWA plans to open routes to Tanzania and Mozambique in partnership with LAM, subject to government approval. Discussions were still on-going as *African Aerospace* went to press.

The Mayotte airline's new CEO is Jean-François Devaux, the former COO of Gabon Airlines. Devaux has more than 35 years' experience in air transport, especially in Africa.



Marie-Joseph Malé:
"Nous poursuivrons
avec confiance."

Austral renoue avec les profits

Air Austral, actionnaire principale d'EWA, a enregistré un résultat d'exploitation positif lors de son premier semestre 2013-2014 malgré un contexte économique dégradé et morose. Ce résultat confirme les choix stratégiques en vue du redressement de la compagnie.

Vincent Chappard
revient sur cette performance.

Air Austral a enregistré un résultat d'exploitation positif lors du premier semestre 2013-2014 après avoir essuyé plus de 7 semestres de lourdes pertes financières. Son PDG, Marie-Joseph Malé, était confronté à de graves turbulences et une situation délicate en mai 2012, avec un fort endettement, une trésorerie sous perfusion et un dialogue social difficile. Il avait lancé alors un vaste plan de restructuration incluant principalement des mesures d'économies et de contrôle des coûts, la refonte du réseau et un ajustement des effectifs.

« Il est cependant important de conserver une grande lucidité sur l'exécution de notre plan. Air Austral a connu une période extrêmement difficile et il faut se garder de tout triomphalisme », précise Marie-Joseph Malé, PDG d'Air Austral.

Côté chiffres, Air Austral a enregistré un résultat d'exploitation positif de 9,27 millions d'euros au premier semestre 2013-2014 contre un résultat négatif de 19,69 millions d'euros au premier semestre de l'exercice précédent. Les charges d'exploitation ont baissé de 16%. Le volume de passagers transportés a progressé de 4% et 82% des sièges offerts à la commercialisation ont été occupés. Malgré un contexte économique dégradé, Air Austral a aussi pu compter sur des éléments conjoncturels favorables par rapport à ses prévisions dont un environnement favorable concernant le prix du kérosène (ce poste représente 30% de ses charges) et un taux de change euro-dollar avantageux. Air Austral dispose d'ailleurs d'un bon taux de couverture. La compagnie a aussi développé une nouvelle activité d'affrètement et de location d'avions pour

d'autres compagnies aériennes. En dégageant de la capacité, elle a travaillé avec la compagnie indonésienne Garuda pour opérer des vols en Boeing 777 pour le transport des pèlerins vers l'Arabie Saoudite (Hadj ou Oumra). Air Austral possède également une flotte d'avions qui est performante et récente avec 4 Boeing 777, 2 Boeing 737-800 et 3 ATR 72-500.

« La compagnie Air Austral est parvenue en un temps record à se redresser et recueille les fruits du travail entrepris depuis maintenant un peu plus d'un an. C'est un moment de grande satisfaction qui vient conforter la stratégie mise en œuvre et sa bonne exécution. Nous poursuivrons avec confiance et lucidité les efforts entrepris pour valider notre retour à l'équilibre », ajoute Marie-Joseph Malé.

La direction générale de la compagnie réunionnaise reste toutefois mobilisée et maintient toujours le cap sur un rééquilibrage financier pour la fin de l'exercice 2013/2014.

« Air Austral est particulièrement attentive à trois éléments clés : le comportement du marché, le prix du kérosène même si la compagnie est couverte à plus de 60% sur l'exercice 2013-2014 et l'impact du taux de change », rappelle Marie-Joseph Malé.

En plus du lancement d'EWA à Mayotte, Air Austral travaille également sur une éventuelle reprise de sa route directe entre La Réunion et les Seychelles.

Air Austral a également dévoilé ses nouveautés pour 2014. A noter un nouveau salon baptisé « Guetali » dans l'enceinte de l'aéroport de La Réunion, un service innovant de paiement en quatre fois via une offre « Kas en Kat », des tarifs promotionnels pour la journée du vendredi et enfin la mise en place de « Handi Austral », un service spécialement dédié aux personnes à mobilité réduite.

Le redressement d'Air Austral semble être bel et bien amorcé, l'avenir nous dira si ce résultat reste lié à une embellie conjoncturelle.

Même si Air Mauritius, Air Seychelles voire Air Madagascar affichent également de meilleurs résultats, elles demeurent néanmoins fragiles. Le marché reste limité et morcelé dans la région de l'océan Indien et il sera nécessaire pour ces compagnies de travailler davantage ensemble et de faire évoluer leurs modèles économiques face aux défis du transport aérien.

SUMMARY

Air Austral gets back into profit

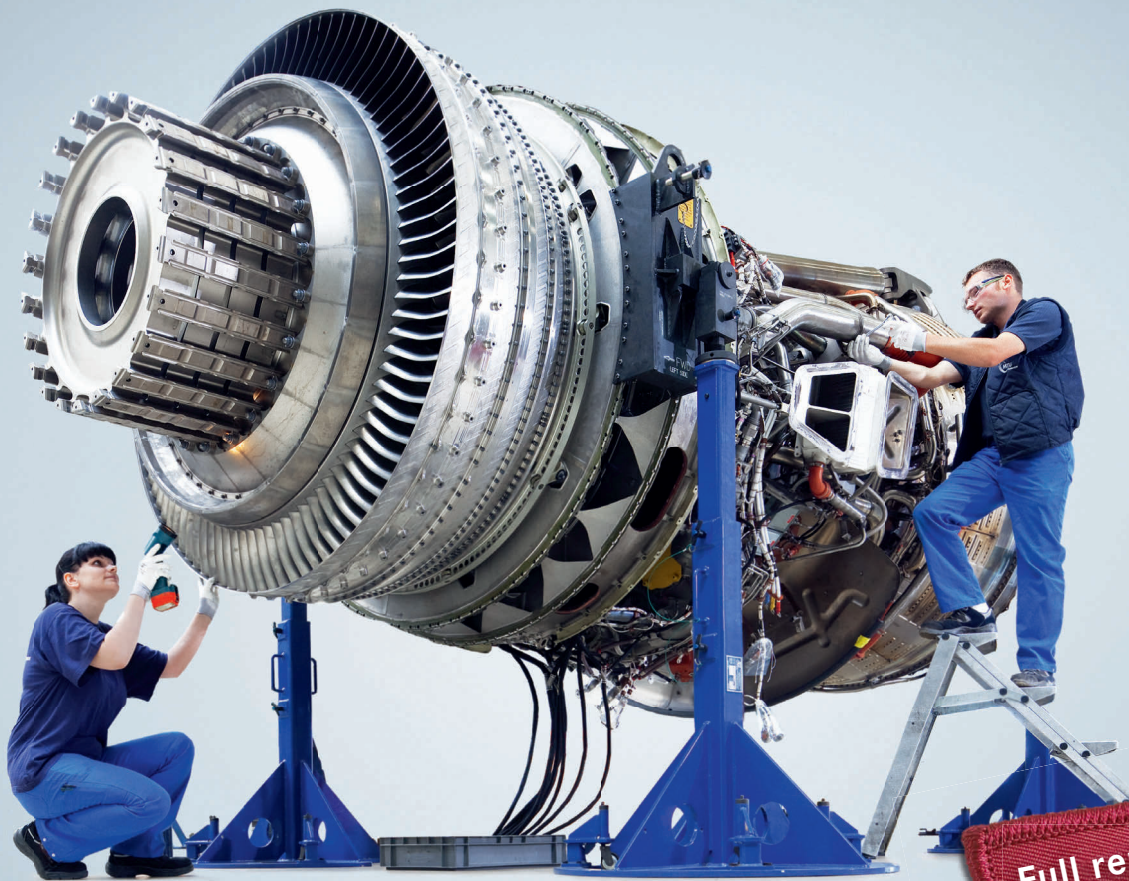
Air Austral recorded a positive operating result in the first half of 2013-2014, despite the weak and sluggish economy. This follows seven semesters of heavy financial losses.

CEO, Marie-Joseph Malé, launched an extensive restructuring plan when he arrived at the airline in May 2012, which included savings and cost control, redesign of the network and workforce adjustments.

"It is important to keep a great insight on the execution of our plan," he said. "Air Austral has had an extremely difficult time and we must be aware of complacency."

The airline enjoyed a positive operating profit of €9.27 million in the first half, against a loss of €19.69 million in the first period last year.

Operating expenses decreased 16%. The volume of passengers carried increased by 4%, and 82% of the seats available for marketing were occupied.

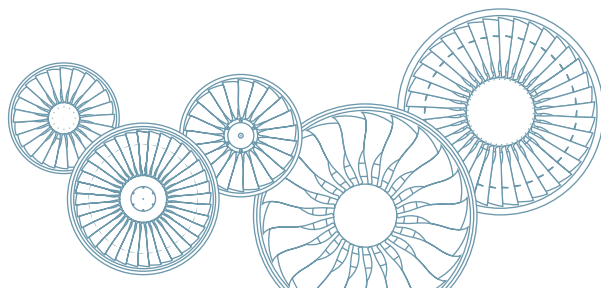


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A new C295 for Egypt on delivery flight via Malta.

AFRICA'S BUS TIMETABLE

«Airbus Military s'impose en Afrique» – Page 51

With the recent delivery of a CN-235 to Cameroon, and the first of two C295s to Ghana, Airbus Military is consolidating its presence in the African military transport aircraft market.

Jon Lake reports.

Airbus Military claims to be the world's leading manufacturer of military transport aircraft, having consistently obtained more than 50% market share over the past 10 years.

The company has received 1,089 total orders, and has delivered 874 military transports and tankers, 641 of which are actually in service.

And, though it lacks a product in the same payload/range category as the class-leading C-130 Hercules, Airbus Military claims to be the only military and transport aircraft manufacturer to develop, produce, sell and support a comprehensive family of airlifters, ranging from three to 45 tonnes of payload.

Many African nations may not have the budgets for the A400M and A330 multi-role tanker and transport (MRTT) aircraft, but Airbus Military's

product range still includes some very relevant (and already popular) types in the 'light and medium' transport aircraft categories, which have great suitability for the challenging operating conditions found in the region, as well as the TC-II and MPT versions of the PZL Orlik turboprop trainer.

Airbus Military's light and medium transport offerings are the product of the 2009 absorption of EADS-CASA which, in turn, was formed from Construcciones Aeronáuticas SA (or CASA) in 1999.

The unpressurised, fixed undercarriage, 25-passenger, 2.8tonne payload C212 (originally known as the Aviocar) is still the most successful and widespread of Airbus Military's aircraft in Africa.

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There are 30 operational (of 42 delivered) in Angola, Botswana, Cape Verde, Congo (Congo-Brazzaville), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Congo-Kinshasa, formerly Zaire), Gabon, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa (ex Transkei), and Zimbabwe.

At least 13 examples of the bigger, pressurised, 51-passenger/six tonne payload CN-235 are operational in Africa, with one more retired from use in 2011 in South Africa. Some 270 CN-235s have been sold and the type is in service with around 40 operators worldwide, making it the best selling airlifter in the light/medium segment. The aircraft has accumulated more than one million flight hours.

The South African aircraft was acquired by the Bophuthatswana Defence Force Air Wing in 1991, and then transferred to the SAAF when Bophuthatswana was reincorporated into South Africa in 1994.



Two CN235-300s are in service in Botswana (whose pair of older CN235-10s were transferred to Togo in July 2012 and Congo Brazzaville in early 2013). Five are in use in Morocco. Further single aircraft serve in Burkina Faso, and Gabon.

Airbus Military lists one operational in Senegal, though other sources suggest that two Indonesian-built CN-235s were delivered to Senegal in 2010 and August 2012 under a \$13 million contract, and that Senegal plans to buy two more aircraft for VIP and cargo duties, perhaps with further examples of the dedicated maritime patrol version of the aircraft.

The Cameroon Air Force is the latest African operator of the CN-235 (and the 16th sub-Saharan nation to operate an Airbus Military light/medium transport aircraft). The new aircraft was ordered in June 2012 and was formally accepted by the customer at the Airbus Military San Pablo final assembly site near Seville, Spain, in July 2013. The CN-235 enjoys outstanding hot and high performance, and an endurance of up to 11 hours, thanks to its low fuel consumption, but it lacks the range, capacity and payload of a 'heritage Herk' (eg the C-130H, let alone the new C-130J Super Hercules), and is more closely comparable to the Lockheed/Alenia C-27J Spartan.

But, by stretching the CN-235 to produce the newer C295 (a developed derivative of the CN-235 with greater capacity and longer range), Airbus Military has provided an aircraft that, while remaining less capable than a C-130, can fly many C-130 missions, and which betters the C-27J in almost all parameters.

The C295 and C-27J have similar payload/range capability but the C295's roomier cabin

By stretching the CN-235 to produce the newer C295, Airbus Military has provided an aircraft which betters the C-27J in almost all parameters.

allows it to carry more passengers, troops, paratroops, stretchers, and pallets than the C-27J, while offering better soft and short runway capabilities and lower fuel consumption.

And, while the C295 is 100kts slower than the C-130, and though it carries about half the payload, offering one third of the range with maximum payload, it has a longer cabin than the standard Hercules and features a more modern cockpit with open-architecture avionics, more efficient engines with lower fuel consumption – a C295 consumes 730litres per flying hour and full in-service support costs represent \$1,354 per hour (assuming 600 hours utilisation) – where the C-130H consumes 3,030 litres per hour and is estimated to cost more than \$5,000 per hour.

The C295 has also been certificated as a civil aircraft under US FAR 25 and European JAR 25 regulations – useful for parapublic, humanitarian and emergency relief missions.

The C295 is also cheaper than a C-130, at less than half the up-front cost (a new C295 costs about the same as a second hand C-130H). It has been estimated that the operating costs of the C295 are

21% of the costs of the C-130, and to transport one tonne of load is 43.24% cheaper in a C295.

The Algerian Air Force received six C295s for transport and maritime patrol duties, and five of these remain in service. Egypt received the first of 12 currently on order on September 24 2011, and five are now in service.

Though the first examples of the new type were delivered in 2001, the C295 is not in service in large numbers in sub-Saharan Africa. The Ghanaian Air Force does, however, operate a pair of C295s, ordered to replace its Fokker F-27s and delivered from November 18 2011.



Ghana's armed forces are among the most professional and up-to-date in Africa, while the nation itself is a mature and stable and increasingly prosperous multi-party democracy.

As such, Ghana is a regional power and commits a significant proportion of its armed forces to international peacekeeping operations, primarily on the African continent (with MONUC in the Democratic Republic of Congo, UNMIL in Liberia, and UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone) but also in Afghanistan, Kosovo, and Lebanon.



SUMMARY

Airbus Military s'impose en Afrique

Airbus Military consolide sa présence sur le marché des avions de transport militaire en Afrique avec la livraison récente d'un CN-235 au Cameroun et du premier C295 au Ghana.

Airbus Military (AMSL) se targue d'être le premier constructeur mondial d'avions de transport militaire avec plus de 50% de part de marché durant les dix dernières années. Il est le seul constructeur d'avions à proposer une famille complète d'avions de transport militaire allant de 3 à 45 tonnes de charge utile. AMSL a reçu à ce jour 1 089 commandes et a livré 874 avions dont 641 sont en service actuellement.

Dans le contexte africain, même si l'acquisition d'un A400M et d'un A330 MRTT semble être trop onéreux pour de nombreux pays, AMSL offre d'autres types d'avions de transport militaire plus légers et compacts comme les versions TC-II et MPT du PZL

Le C212 (connu à l'origine comme Aviocar) reste l'un des avions qui a eu le plus de succès en Afrique. Il représente 30 avions en opération (sur 42 livrés) en Angola, Botswana, Cap-Vert, Congo, Gabon, Kenya, Lesotho, Libye, Mozambique, Sénégal, Afrique du Sud et Zimbabwe.

Le CN-235 est également opérationnel en Afrique. Cet avion a été vendu à quelque 270 exemplaires dans le monde auprès de 40 opérateurs. Deux CN-235 sont en service au Botswana et cinq au Maroc. L'Armée de l'Air Camerounaise opère également le CN-235 qui jouit d'excellentes performances et peut voler jusqu'à onze heures, grâce à sa faible consommation de carburant.

En développant une version stretch du CN-235, AMSL a créé le C295. Cet avion, tout en restant en retrait d'un C-130, peut néanmoins assurer les nombreuses missions du C-130 et surpasser les spécifications du C-27J. Le C295 consomme 730 litres par heure de vol et son coût en opération est d'environ 1000€ par heure. Le C-130H consomme 3030 litres par heure de vol avec un coût en opération estimé à 3750€ par heure. Le C295 a également été certifié comme un avion civil selon les réglementations américaines et européennes (FAR 25 et JAR 25). Il est également moins onéreux à l'achat qu'un C-130.

La Force aérienne algérienne a reçu six C295 dédiés au transport et aux patrouilles maritimes. L'Égypte a reçu le premier de ses douze avions actuellement en commande. Les forces armées du Ghana comptent parmi les plus professionnels d'Afrique. Le pays est une puissance régionale et place ses forces armées dans des opérations de maintien de la paix internationales. Les Forces armées du Ghana opèrent désormais deux nouveaux C295 pour des opérations de maintien de la paix comme au Mali.

Le C295 sera enfin fabriqué avec une nouvelle norme de production (C295W) permettant l'installation d'ailettes et de moteurs améliorés. Le C295W sera donc la version standard de l'avion et sera désormais commercialisé pendant le dernier trimestre 2014. Sa certification est prévue pour le second trimestre 2014.

AMSL assure que les améliorations offertes par le C295W vont rendre cet avion plus attrayant aux yeux des opérateurs africains.

Ghana is a customer for the C295 as is Cameroon (inset).



Ghana provided the first commander of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) – a multilateral west African armed mutual defence force originally established by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1990 to intervene in the civil war in Liberia.

The Ghana armed forces currently rely on civilian jets for the transport of peacekeeping forces to their theatres of operation but, as part of the 2009-2012 strategic plan of the Ghana armed forces, they are to use two new C295 aircraft to support UN peace-keeping operations in Mali, using a \$81 million loan facility from the Deutsche Bank for the purchase of two C295 military transport aircraft.

Ghana is reportedly the first African country to be given such a responsibility by the United Nations in the aviation sector.

The first of these aircraft was seen undergoing testing at Airbus Military's San Pablo facility in October 2013, wearing an overall white colour scheme with UN on the nose and fin, and United Nation on the rear fuselage, but with a Spanish

Ghana's armed forces are among the most professional and up-to-date in Africa.

flag and the aircraft's construction number covering up where Ghana's national markings and serial will be applied.

In future, C295s will be built to a new production standard, known as the C295W, allowing the installation of winglets and uprated engines as standard.

Announced on May 30 2013, and tested on the former C295 AEW demonstrator, the C295W is particularly aimed at those operating the aircraft from 'hot and high' airfields, where payload increases in excess of 1,000kg are promised, together with increases in endurance (by 30-60 minutes) and operating altitude (by up to 2,000ft), with an overall reduction in fuel consumption of around 4% depending on configuration and conditions, and all for a weight penalty of just 90kg.

The C295W is now being offered to the market and will be the standard version of the aircraft from the fourth quarter of 2014, following planned certification in the second quarter.

The improvements offered by the C295W promise to make the type even more attractive to African operators.

As Boeing seeks to establish a foothold in Africa, Alan Dron, looks at the prospects for the American defence giant.

ROUTES TO ROOTS

«Boeing cherche un pied-à-terre en Afrique» – Page 54

It is a sign of Boeing's growing emphasis on international defence sales, says Paul Oliver, that when he joined his department some years ago, personnel were located roughly equally between the US and being 'forward deployed' to the countries that formed the division's markets.

Today, there are just two people working out of the US, with the rest based in the regions they serve.

"It really is about partnerships," said Oliver, vice-president, business development for the Middle East and Africa with Boeing Defense, Space & Security (BDS), although he noted that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' template that can be applied to the Middle East.

"All the countries are different. In Saudi Arabia, it's partly about job creation. In the UAE it's not; senior executives with Mubadala would rather do high end of the value chain work than have 10,000 people employed.

"In Kuwait, they are looking to sustain their existing aircraft, so how do they do that? In Qatar, their national vision is about education; they've invested a lot to get young people interested in

engineering and science subjects." Boeing is helping in Qatar's efforts.

As for Africa, Oliver's other area of responsibility, Boeing is engaged in a game of catch-up, he admits.

"Until last year, BDS didn't have a strong presence in Africa. Quite honestly, we didn't understand the market. For the past nine to 12 months we've been on a learning journey.

"Africa is a new market for us and we're trying to do it smartly. Where are the right partnerships and where are the national visions we can support? That's where we are right now."



To help the defence business establish roots in the continent, BDS personnel often make use of Boeing's success in selling airliners to African carriers, taking along to meetings Boeing Commercial Aircraft representatives who have already established contacts in-country.

Boeing is looking for a location for a new African office to handle defence sales in the continent: "We're trying to figure out where to put

The C-17 may be one of Boeing's best chances to enter the African defence market, if Algerian interest is confirmed.



a new office," said Hill. "Where do we place the seed that will grow quickest in sub-Saharan Africa?" Nigeria and Ethiopia are among the countries that Boeing is studying.

Oliver and his team will be using the show not only to strengthen those new partnerships but also to pursue some highly intriguing potential deals.

One of the most interesting is the sudden emergence of Algeria as a potential customer for several Boeing products.

Africa's largest nation has leapt on to the scene as a potential buyer for Boeing's C-17 Globemaster III heavy military transports, as well as air-to-air refuelling aircraft and unmanned aerial systems (UAS) – potentially Boeing's Scan Eagle.

"There is a real desire [for Algeria] to have C-17s, in particular, although we don't see anything happening imminently," said Shep Hill, president, Boeing International, in a pre-show briefing.

A US Air Force C-17 is reported to have carried out evaluation flights in Algeria in April and Boeing personnel have been in Algeria three times in recent months, an indication of how seriously it



takes the country's interest. Algeria has not previously figured strongly in Boeing's list of potential buyers of the C-17; its current medium- and heavy-lift transport duties are served by a combination of the Lockheed Martin C-130H and Ilyushin Il-76.

With September's announcement that Boeing would cease production of the C-17 in 2015, any potential purchase is now up against a tight deadline. However, of the remaining 22 C-17s to come off the production line, 13 are what in commercial airline terms would be called 'whitetails', as yet unsold, so the possibility to snap up some of the four-turboprop airlifters exists.

"They've certainly expressed some interest in mobility," said Dennis Muilenburg, BDS president and CEO, "both in terms of moving military assets and humanitarian needs. There are no specific numbers yet. We're trying to understand their needs and infrastructure."

Oliver added: "They're worried about their southern border, where they've had incursions." That potentially provides an opening for Boeing's UAS unit, In Situ, with its small UAS,

Continued
on Page 54

First blood for South African combat helicopter

A mere 34 years after its first flight, South Africa's Denel Rooivalk attack helicopter faced its first combat deployment during late October. The South African aircraft engaged in a successful rocket attack against a rebel M23 unit in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Although reports of the action are scarce, it is believed the Rooivalk's integrated navigation and weapons systems enabled it to begin the attacks on the rebels, who were equipped with anti-aircraft guns that had been previously used against other UN helicopters, while under instrument meteorological conditions (IMC).

Observers had noticed at least two of the aircraft being prepared for their move to the DRC at Denel's OR Tambo International Airport facility a few months back.

It is believed three Rooivalks were positioned in the eastern DRC, tasked by the United Nations to support ground troops in their hostilities against M23 rebels close to Goma.



The helicopters formed an attack component of the UN's MONUSCO mission as part of the Force Intervention Brigade. They were flown by South African Air Force (SAAF) 16 Squadron, based at Air Force Base Bloemspruit.

The Rooivalks supplemented an existing detachment of Mi-35

Hind E helicopters from the Force Aérienne Congolaise.

A direct result of the border war between South Africa and Angolan-based forces, the Rooivalk has had a long service development period following a number of lost international sales opportunities.

The aircraft has been displayed in Europe and the Middle East and was close to gaining an order from the Turkish and Malaysian Air Forces. Twelve have been built, although it is not known how many are currently operational.

Based on the Eurocopter Oryx helicopter, already in service within the SAAF, the attack version makes extensive use of French-designed dynamic components.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 53

ScanEagle. "Put a ScanEagle with 24-hour persistence out there and send out a helicopter if it sees something."

The difficulty of watching over the vast Saharan expanses of Algeria's southern regions was sharply pointed up in January this year, when terrorists seized the Ain Amenas natural gas plant, 100km from the Libyan border, killing at least 38 oil company personnel as the incident ended in a bloody fire-fight with the Algerian armed forces.

The Middle East, untroubled by financial problems such as sequestration (the US) or the economic doldrums (Europe) remains a prime attraction for defence salesmen.

Hill described the across-the-board budget cuts imposed by Congress to cut the US Government's deficit as "mindless", adding: "It will have a real impact [on US purchases] in 2014-15. It's going to have an impact on a number of platforms and new starts."

That makes international sales more important than ever for defence companies like Boeing, to fill the gap caused by the multi-billion dollar drop in the US defence budget.

BDS currently makes 27% of its income from exports. The target is to get this figure to 30%, with the Middle East and Asia earmarked as the areas where that additional growth will be found. Boeing accepts, however, that the tricky part will not be to get to the 30% mark but to sustain that level.



One major contract that will help is the Royal Saudi Air Force deal for 84 F-15SA (Saudi advanced) variants of the F-15 Strike Eagle. That deal alone will keep the St Louis production line running until 2018.

The basic F-15 design dates back to the late 1960s and questions have been raised in some quarters as to whether it can continue to perform effectively against more modern types. This opposition was notable in South Korea in mid-September, when a group of former senior Republic of Korea Air Force officers cited the aircraft's age in criticising leaked announcements that the F-15 had won the country's contract for a new fighter.

The criticism seemed to have had some effect; Korea decided to re-run the contest, with the F-15 to be pitched once again against the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II and the Eurofighter Typhoon.

Boeing tacitly accepts that the aircraft cannot match some of the capabilities of more modern types, but Hill argues that the F-15 "gives you 85% of the capability at 50% of the price" compared to more modern types.

With the US Government committed to the F-35, Boeing believes that the next two decades will see no completely new US fighter design appear. Rather, there will be upgrades of existing types and the appearance of new unmanned systems.

SOMMAIRE

Boeing cherche un pied-à-terre en Afrique

Les ventes internationales de la division Défense Espace et Sécurité de Boeing (BDS) prennent de plus en plus d'importance et son personnel a été plus fortement déployé auprès de ses marchés militaires.

C'est la tendance constatée par Paul Olivier, directeur du développement commercial pour le Moyen-Orient et l'Afrique, de la division BDS. Aujourd'hui, la majorité du personnel est basée dans diverses régions et le partenariat demeure un élément incontournable. Selon lui, BDS s'est engagé à consolider sa présence en Afrique et surtout à mieux appréhender le marché. « Il faut étudier ou nouer les bons partenariats et intégrer les visions des pays avec lesquels nous projetons de travailler. Nous étions dans un processus d'apprentissage durant les 12 derniers mois. »

Pour développer ce marché et s'enraciner sur le continent, le personnel de BDS s'appuie sur le succès des ventes d'avions civils de l'avionneur auprès des compagnies aériennes africaines. BDS bénéficie ainsi de contacts bien établis dans des pays africains.

La division est également à la recherche d'un emplacement pour installer ses nouveaux bureaux en Afrique afin de piloter les ventes. Le Nigeria et l'Éthiopie figurent parmi les pays prospectés par Boeing.

Paul Oliver et son équipe comptent également muscler la prospection pour décrocher de nouveaux contrats et l'Algérie semble émerger comme un client pour de nombreux produits de BDS. Plusieurs grands pays d'Afrique, en particulier du bassin méditerranéen, sont des acheteurs potentiels du C-17 Globemaster III, d'avions de ravitaillement en vol ou encore des systèmes d'aéronefs sans pilote (UAS) et en particulier le drone de combat «

Scan Eagle » de Boeing. A noter qu'un C-17 de l'US Air Force aurait effectué des vols d'évaluation en Algérie en avril 2013. Boeing a également annoncé en septembre dernier la possibilité d'arrêt de la production du C-17 en 2015. Selon Dennis Muilenburg, président directeur général de BDS, le pays a exprimé un certain intérêt pour plus de mobilité, à la fois en termes de déplacement militaires et de besoins humanitaires.

La difficulté de veiller sur les vastes étendues du sud du pays a été fortement mise en lumière en janvier 2013 lorsque des terroristes ont pénétré dans l'usine de gaz naturel d'Ain Amenas.



Le Moyen-Orient et par ricochet l'Afrique restent donc des régions attractives pour les équipes de ventes de BDS surtout face aux problèmes financiers des États-Unis ou encore la crise économique en Europe. Cette tendance rend les ventes internationales encore plus importantes pour les entreprises de défense comme Boeing afin de combler le vide engendré par la baisse du budget de la défense américaine.

BDS génère actuellement 27% de ses revenus à l'exportation et l'objectif est d'atteindre 30%. D'importants contrats au Moyen-Orient ou en Afrique pourraient être conclus avec notamment l'armée de l'air saoudienne ou la Corée du Sud. Des avions comme le F-15, F-18E/F, P-8A Poséidon ou des drones de combat restent en pointe.

L'Algérie semble émerger comme un client pour de nombreux produits de BDS.

Le C-17 peut être l'une des meilleures chances de Boeing à entrer sur le marché africain de la défense, si l'intérêt algérien est confirmée.





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Morocco became the focus for business aviation operators as two regional groups held major events in Marrakech. **Liz Moscrop** was at the Middle East and north African MEBA conference, while **Jane Stanbury** reports from the AfBAA event.

MEBAC

As time goes by, Morocco's MENA role is set to grow

Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman immortalised the Kingdom of Morocco in the film *Casablanca* in one of the most famous aviation scenes in Hollywood history. Three quarters of a century on, and the country is one of Africa's hotspots for aviation development, which is why the Middle East Business Aviation Association (MEBAA), opted to host one of its MEBAC conferences in Marrakech.

In what it describes as "a bid to unite the Middle East and North African region's business aviation industry around its common challenges and trends", MEBAA united with HE Abdullah Bouhouche – director general, Directorate General of Civil Aviation in Morocco – to create the event.

MEBAA founding chairman, Ali Al Naqbi, opened the event with a reminder that the association is an active member of the International Business Aviation Council (IBAC) and aims to be a link between members and government entities in discussing the challenges and obstacles facing private and business aviation in the MENA region.

The association also aims to increase the private aviation market share in MENA, and offers strong purchasing power for its members through applying collective buying methods, which contribute to reducing costs.



In particular, Al Naqbi pointed to the recent MEBAA aviation insurance scheme (MAIS) initiative, a unique product that lowers costs for its members to achieve competitive premiums and broader coverage. He said: "The strong message here is to raise awareness of the important role of private and business aviation in supporting the global economy. We will do this by conducting exhibitions and offering training forums and open discussion panels with elite decision-makers in the private and business aviation sector, both in the local market and all over the world."

He called on the audience in Marrakech to "help us to have an action plan to follow up and solve the challenges that hinder process". Indeed, he added that the market in Morocco had grown 12% since last year, which could rise to up to 15% at the end of this year.

Nabil Lakhel, director of air transport, for Morocco's Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGAC) said: "Civil aviation plays a crucial role in the development of countries. It is swift, efficient and safe. Here it is also based on international standards – institutional, technical and legal. We have opened horizons with the EU and last year transported 15 million passengers. Such extended growth led Morocco to start to develop infrastructure and services."

He added that air charter services were the "lever to sustainable development", saying that the conference aimed to explore new opportunities for business aviation in the country by implementing a network of business operators and developing opportunities in the Moroccan market.

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Ali Al Naqbi, founding chairman of MEBAA: North African market is growing.

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He said: "Morocco is an important player. The air taxi market is crucial and showing great benefits."

Although the installed fleet is small by the standards of more matured markets – comprising 14 jets and 12 operators, the fleet flew more than 2,000 hours last year, creating a turnover of 147 million dirhams, which was a growth of 37% compared to 2011.

He said Morocco needed to "keep up with the development of international standards to attract more international companies to the country".

Some of the OEMs are there already. Bombardier recently set up shop. There are 24 airports in Morocco, 15 international and nine domestic. There are also many MRO facilities in surrounding areas, which are capable of maintaining business aviation aircraft, as well as airliners.

Al Naqbi said: "Business aviation is bound to grow in this region. Populations are growing. There is an increase in high-net-worth individuals and activities such as horseracing, government operations and medevac all continue to grow. As well as oil, the banks and insurance businesses are generating wealth in the area. Lots of banks and insurance companies are starting to fund aircraft."



Richard Koe, managing director of market data provider WINGX, offered statistics of actual movements and aircraft in north Africa and the Indian Ocean, including: Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Sudan, Djibouti, Comoros, Mayotte and Madagascar.

He said growth had been strong in the region until 2009, but had fallen back with the onset and aftermath of the Arab Spring uprisings. There were 15,759 movements across MENA in 2012, which was a 25% fall in activity since 2011. However, the region in total had fallen just 3% last year, which was a shallower drop than in Europe, which fell by 5%.

Koe was bullish, however, and said: "North Africa IMF data indicates a 3 to 5% growth in this region. Morocco is a big market connection between these countries and the rest of world. North Africa is not just a gateway to Europe, but also to other regions."

He explained that the main destination was France but the biggest growth destination was Russia, at 81% this year. Turkey and Belgium were also notable. In Morocco, Rabat and Casablanca generated the most activity.

Most trips are short-haul and most regional operators are small, with only two to three aircraft. Indeed, Egypt has lost an operator since 2000, and now is home to ten operators with 39 aircraft between them.

In terms of handling, the lack of clear guidelines worldwide is an issue. Lakhel admitted that Morocco implemented regulation 544 for airlines starting up, but it does not differentiate between commercial carriers and GA operators.



Involvement and understanding key to regional growth

More than 120 delegates from 76 companies attended the African Business Aviation Association (AfBAA) inaugural regional symposium in Marrakech.

Abdenbi Manar, general director of Morocco's Civil Aviation Authority, opened the event by stressing that business aviation was a core part of Moroccan aviation and that the government was investing in infrastructure and policies to support its growth.

Other countries, too, were backing the sector. Captain Dele Sasegbon, director of general aviation at the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority, was also actively involved in the event, demonstrating his active support for the development of the sector.

Chaired by *African Aerospace* editor-in-chief, Alan Peaford, members and non-members debated topics relating to the symposium's main theme, which was to explore the many benefits of adopting business aviation in Africa.

The need for participation was recognised as a paramount theme, as AfBAA president Tarek Ragheb commented during his opening address. "Business aviation will be the vehicle that will improve economies and social structure in the region, but it is not possible to change anything without participation," he said.

Symposium delegates included representatives from the OEM, FBO, financial, legal, operator, flight support, and safety sectors, who all agreed that participation at a number of levels was integral to supporting development.

Throughout the meeting, delegates argued it was essential that governments improve their understanding of the industry to better comprehend the value it adds socially and economically to Africa. Education is key to development and a general consensus was reached that those in business aviation should support the need for increased educational opportunities to attract more people to the industry.

Mohammed Al Husary, executive president of UAS, the principal sponsor, said that the support services company had already committed to training two scholars through the Emirates Aviation College in Dubai and called on other companies to consider sponsoring students.

Delegates also agreed that the negative perception of African business aviation and the aviation sector in general, needed to be addressed. "Aviation safety is

critical and we need to address this to change perception," commented Ragheb.

Many civil aviation authorities (CAAs) are still unclear of the value of business aviation, so Dalia Air's Hind El Achchabi – an AfBAA founding member and chair of the international relations committee – is reaching out to the ministries of transport across Africa to explain the values of supporting the industry and to present business aviation as a valuable tool for local economies.

CAAs are also being invited to become honorary members of AfBAA to encourage better understanding.

Speaker panels, including representatives from insurance companies, financiers, lawyers, taxation bodies and banks, all agreed that safety was a major concern when a client approached them for their services. All of the services are available to the market, but a lack of statistics, trained manpower, and inconsistent risk analysis across the continent all contributed to the negative views.



Andreas Cordes, from the European Aviation Safety Association (EASA), presented the recently proposed authorisation for third-country operators (TCO). The suggestion is that all operators, outside of Europe, engaged in commercial air transport operations in Europe must demonstrate compliance to EASA with ICAO standards. The process was described as relatively simple, with an online application leading to eventual approval, depending on the EASA assessment. It was suggested that this would help standardise operator safety if African operators participated. Acting as a validation, rather than a replacement, of local competent authority rules, the TCO is anticipated to come into force this year.

Other challenges noted by the meeting included the size of the continent; the lack of on the ground infrastructure, with few FBOs operating at European standards; and airports lacking the full range of services.

Spare part acquisition continues to be problematic, with no defined network of OEM suppliers, particularly in the sub-Saharan region; lack of MRO services; lack of consistent safe fuel supply; and a lack of clear statistics to support investment plans.

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The new Falcon 5X was the big news at the world's major business aviation event while the latest variant of the Cessna Caravan drew a lot of interest.

While BRIC countries tend to grab more of the headlines, in particular China (for example the order of 10 Piaggio Avanti II turboprops by SR Jet of Beijing, announced at NBAA), Africa is also predicted to be one of the fastest-growing regions due to lack of road/rail infrastructure, the vast distances involved, and the rapidly expanding businesses in industries such as mining.

The US National Business Aviation Association is leading calls for business aviation to be better valued and understood, and at the October event NBAA president Ed Bolen was again repeating the “no plane, no gain” mantra it has targeted squarely at the US Congress.

At the same time, he underlined that OEMs had continued to invest in new, and some improved, products.

For the African market many of these are of great interest, from Beechcraft King Airs, Cessna Caravans and Pilatus PC-12s, all the way to new developments such as the Pilatus PC-24 and Dassault 5X, which was launched at the show.



Powered by two new-design Snecma Silvercrest engines, this aircraft will have a wider cabin than the 7X but shorter range, at 5,200nm, and come at a list price of \$45 million. The key point, however, is that it will be some 20% more fuel-efficient than what is currently available in the market.

The PC-24 mock-up made its NBAA debut, the new jet (Pilatus's first) having been launched at EBACE in May last year (see page 59, *African Aerospace*, July – September 2013).

The Swiss manufacturer is marketing the aircraft as a versatile one, suitable for regions such as Africa, as it will be more able to operate from relatively poorly-maintained strips and even features an aft cargo door, like the PC-12.

Nextant again turned heads with its Beech 400 re-work, the 400XTi, and notched up a 50-aircraft order from US charter operator Travel Management Group. Despite Beechcraft launching a rival programme, to date Nextant has proved popular in the market and seems to have

Opportunity knocks for the developing world

When the world's business aviation industry met in Las Vegas, Nevada in October last year for the annual National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) convention, there was an international flavour to the event despite the US remaining by far the largest market.

Ian Sheppard reports.

got its timing right. And as if to add insult to injury, Nextant announced that it would start to offer King Air C90s re-engined with GE H80 turboprops, along with several other refinements and component re-lifing.



Among those reacting to threats of new aircraft in the market was Cessna, which displayed its almost-certificated Citation M2 at the NBAA static display, which was at Henderson Airport on the south side of Las Vegas.

Bombardier, meanwhile, delivered the first Learjet 75, and on the smaller end of the business jet scale, Eclipse delivered its first new model 550.

HondaJet announced that it was still on target for certification in late 2014; its test aircraft attracted

considerable interest at the static display.

Perhaps the most talked-about news related to new US venture Wheels Up, which may be something of a model for African transportation in the distant future.

Farnborough-based Gama Group was drafted in to operate a fleet of Beechcraft King Air 350is, 105 of which are in the process of being ordered by Wheels Up, with the first 350i being delivered at NBAA.

The New-York-based venture started selling memberships and providing flights on November 1, using a combination of King Airs and VistaJet Bombardier Global family long-range jets.

JetSuite also announced at the show that it had ordered more Cessna Citation CJ3s to support Wheels Up operations.

Brazilian manufacturer Embraer brought examples from its whole business jet product

The US National Business Aviation Association is leading calls for business aviation to be better valued and understood.



The Eclipse 550 (left) and the Bombardier LearJet 75 made their show debuts.

line, and announced a new Lineage 1000E model, while also unveiling a range of Phenom options for its 2014 model.

Various analyst and manufacturer forecasts emerged at the event, including one from Honeywell. The company's latest Business Aviation Outlook report sees 9,250 new business jets being delivered between now and 2022, with the pace of activity picking up in 2014 along with the global economic recovery.

Honeywell professed itself surprised to find survey results that indicated demand from North American operators was up 8%, making it 61% of the market (Africa and the Middle East still represents 4%; Latin America 18%; Europe 12% (down 4%); and Asia Pacific 5%, (down 2%).

Meanwhile JetNet predicted that the world business jet fleet would increase by 36% over the next 10 years.

JetNet director Rolland Vincent predicted the next decade would be: "The best years business aviation has ever experienced. We are witnessing a large-scale globalisation of demand for the industry's products and services."

Echoing this, Gulfstream president Larry Flynn said: "Emerging markets that previously seemed hesitant over aviation are now beginning to accept, even embrace, it... there's plenty of room for these regions to grow."



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A charter operator in Tanzania is matching the standards in the US or Europe. Alan Peaford reports.

King Air 350i ideal for Tanzanair's growth plan

For an aviation company to survive in the tough environment of east Africa, it has to have something special going for it – and Tanzanian business aviation operator Tanzanair has been in business for almost 45 years.

The company has had some bad times – the most recent being the loss of a King Air B200 in a forced landing in Lake Manyara in August 2013, where all passengers and crew were saved by local fishermen – but also some good times.

Now, according to managing director John Samaras, Tanzanair is opening a new chapter in its growth.

This was demonstrated with the acquisition of a new Beechcraft King Air 350i, the flagship of Beechcraft - now part of a \$1.4bn takeover by Textron, announced December 27.

Samaras said it would be used to meet increased demand from large companies in the oil and gas, mining, corporate and government sectors, as well as demand from smaller, fast-growing businesses. This reflects the overall growth in business aviation in Africa, which has seen an increase of 49.5% in business aircraft deliveries between 2008-12, when compared to 2002-07.

For Tanzanair the growth has been tangible. "Private aviation is becoming more useful as business grows in the region," Samaras said. "Primarily, the places we go to are the places where the scheduled carriers won't go. Also, many of these carriers are unreliable. If a group has an important meeting they will now often opt for a charter, they tell us they find it more convenient and also cost-effective. Our business is growing at around 12% a year."

Samaras used the example of a brewery, which chartered the new arrival for several days to dash around Tanzania to its factories and agents with the legs (up to two-and-a-half hours) proving to be ideal for the new King Air.

Beechcraft's, vice president of sales for Europe, Middle East and Africa, Scott Plumb, said research by the

manufacturer showed there were 166 registered airports in Tanzania, yet 95% of them were too short or unimproved and, therefore, not available to larger commercial transport – but still open to aircraft like the King Air 350i. "This is the perfect aircraft to meet the challenging operating demands in the region," he said.

"The King Air 350i stands head and shoulders above other turboprops and this new aircraft will make a fantastic addition to our fleet," Samaras said. Tanzanair also operates two Beechcraft B1900s for oilfield shuttles, two King Air B200s and five Cessna Caravans.

The new aircraft is fitted in VIP configuration for eight passengers, with two additional seats at the rear allowing it flexibility for 10 passengers for short flights where luggage is not an issue.

"This is ideal for what we need for Tanzania. If we are chartered to go further afield, then we can take seven or eight passengers with baggage more than 400 nautical miles and not have to make the fuel stops we would have done in the other aircraft," Samaras said.

The company has also been focusing on safety.

"We have a fully qualified quality and safety department and have spent a lot of money working with the oil and gas industry to bring it to an acceptable level.



"Highly competent people have been brought in and are changing culture within. There have been some issues with the local unlicensed personnel. For us it is an issue of changing the culture to push proactive safety across all levels of the company.

"But it is working. Exxon Mobil sent a safety manager from Houston to check before they used us. With every finding we prove we have done it. We believe we are second to none in Tanzania and exceed the standards of many companies in Europe, because safety management is mandatory here."

The King Air 350i has already made such an impact that Samaras has had enquiries about a single company buying it and putting it into the Tanzanair-managed fleet.

"If that happens, I will not hesitate from buying another," he said.

Plumb also sees greater opportunities for Tanzanair. "John and his team often go through high-level audits to make sure Tanzanair is in compliance with what those flight departments see, or want, before they put their executives on the aircraft. We see a level of sophistication in Tanzanair that is different and is equal to the standards that those flight departments have in their own existing operations."

Africa has seen an increase of 49.5% in business aircraft deliveries between 2008-12, when compared to 2002-07.

Tanzanair's latest arrival - the King Air 350i is fitted with a VIP interior.





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Business aviation is often dismissed as being the preserve of the rich and famous. Alan Peaford meets a Kenyan operator that sees its VIP customers in the front line.

Phoenix rises from the smoke of the battlefields

With less than 10 miles to fly until its destination, the lone Kenyan-registered business jet makes a sudden manoeuvre and descends rapidly to a new height of just 10 metres above the Indian Ocean.

For Phoenix Aviation's Captain Steve Parkinson, this is no act of foolhardy airmanship, but a clear procedure laid down by his company for safety reasons.

While the choppy waters offer their own risks for his crew and passengers, Parkinson knows there is a much greater threat facing the Nairobi-based charter operator.

"The biggest danger is SAM-7 missiles fired by Al-Shabaab," he explained. "We have learned that the reflection from the water confuses the missiles and deflects them from finding us."

The Phoenix-owned Cessna Citation Excel is on a charter operation for the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF) flying doctor service, and is on a mission to Mogadishu, where two members of the African Union troops sent into Somalia to fight against the Al-Shabaab-Al Qaida forces, have suffered injuries from a suicide bomb attack.



"Mogadishu is fairly regular destination for us," Parkinson said "We reckon we have brought out about 1,800 troops since it started and there are lots of different challenges.

"Today, for example, we took off from the downwind runway. Al Shabaab fighters were throwing grenades over the perimeter fence at the upwind end of the runway but there was plenty of runway to get above them and then we had to stay low to avoid the surface-to-air missiles fired from skiffs. After that, it was keep a decent look-out for drones."

The Excel successfully brought the two injured troops back to the AMREF centre at Nairobi's Wilson Airport before being parked at the Phoenix hangar, nearby. As the aircraft was cleaned, Parkinson headed upstairs to the office of his company chairman – his father Bill.



Two injured soldiers from the African Union forces are stabilised on the apron at Mogadishu before evacuation to Nairobi.

Inset: The two injured soldiers are cared for as Steve Parkinson ferries them back to safety from the battle zone.

Bill Parkinson is a legend in east African aviation circles. The co-founder of Phoenix, now just about to celebrate his 81st birthday, is a leader, a motivator and an entrepreneurial risk-taker. You only need to spend minutes walking around the hangar and offices of the Nairobi operator to sense the one-family unified feel of this business.

Director of marketing Karen Bromham explained: "I met Bill when I was seven years old and watched him doing aerobatics. When I came back to Kenya 20 years later as a trained lawyer, Bill asked me to work here. I refused but

he said, 'just come for one day a week then'. I did and I have been here since.

"Throughout the whole company you know you can speak up, contribute ideas or new ways of doing things, and you are listened to. You are not an employee, you are part of a family in an environment of loyalty and one where there is a real shared passion for aviation."

The company has a strong commitment to safety and to quality assurance. "We recognised that we have to be better than the standards," Bill said. "There is a transition going on in Africa

Continued
on Page 66

Family ties: Steve and Bill Parkinson building a great reputation in East Africa.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 64

towards more structure and away from the old 'wild west' seat-of-the-pants flying. We have set ourselves on international standards and have sought out the toughest of accreditations."

Among others, Phoenix has attained the Wyvern Wingman certification; Commercial Airlift Review Board (CARB) approvals by the US Government to enable it to transport American military personnel; and it has ISO 9002 quality assurance.

The Parkinsons admit that their particular operational procedures don't always meet the more traditional business aviation operator manuals.

"We had one auditor, a former senior training captain with British Airways, who closed the book straight away," Steve said. "We asked him to fly with us on a charter to Mogadishu and see if he had any alternative suggestions. We landed. The AMREF medical professionals were treating a patient on the tarmac to get him stabilised for flight. Meanwhile, Al Shabaab launched a series of mortar attacks on the airport. The auditor yelled for us to get out. When we got back with the patient safe and sound, he signed off our procedures."

Medevac now accounts for about 60% of the Phoenix business, with 24-hour operations allowing the company to work across the whole of the African continent to rescue or repatriate patients, or take them for specialised treatment in Europe on behalf of AMREF.

Phoenix has a fleet of five Cessna Citations (four Bravos and the Excel), two Cessna Caravans, a Beechcraft King Air 350 and a Eurocopter AS350 helicopter.



Sharing the hangar space is Steve's own Super Cub Ranger, as well as a collection of pristine classic cars belonging to Bill, which had just grabbed first, second and fourth prizes in the Nairobi Car Club's annual cours d'elegance the previous weekend.

The company regularly carries out charters for the United Nations and other NGOs in east Africa, as well as corporate, VIP and government minister transportation.

A growing sector in Kenya is in the oil and gas business. British oil exploration company, Tullow, has discovered reserves in the country and activities in that sector are growing.

"We have had to demonstrate our compliance with international standards," said Bromham. "The oil companies want to see that we are adhering to safe procedures."

The operator is also looking at growing its fleet to meet the demands of the oil industry as exploration moves towards production.

Downstairs, in flight operations, work is under way planning a charter for a Swiss multi-national, which would be covering a number of sub-Saharan countries in just a few days. Phoenix holds blanket approvals for a number of countries for medevac activities – although like many other



Partner Sati Reel has helped develop an extensive MRO service.

operators it finds west African approvals particularly difficult in an emergency.

It has good relationships with civil aviation authorities and airport operators throughout the continent and rarely has problems with permits for its VIP and corporate operations.

This particular charter sees one of the stops being in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). That brings a frown to the face of Eva Kamenwa, one of the company's four flight attendants.

"It is difficult to get a good sandwich for our VIP customers in DRC," she said. "We do explain about the challenges in certain places and usually our passengers understand."

As well as aircraft charter, Phoenix has a well-respected MRO business led by Bill's co-founder, Sati Reel, who is managing director of the company.

Reel and Parkinson met in 1972 when Bill had a problem with his personal Cessna 402. Licensed engineer Reel was on hand to make a quick repair. The two men became friends and eventually business partners.

"Bill took care of the flying and I took care of the aircraft," Reel explained. "This company is not one for collar and tie in the boardroom. We would often have our meetings on the squash court and sort our things there. I would even sometimes let Bill win," he laughed.

From handling just their own company aircraft, Phoenix Aviation now provides maintenance services for operators across east Africa. As a Cessna-approved facility, the company now provides MRO from single-engine pistons through to the Citations. It has its own avionics shop; a prop repair unit; and electrical workshop working

on magnetos, alternators, cable management and starters; as well as maintaining and repairing engine hot sections and holding a wide supply of tyres.

"We really are a one-stop-shop" Reel said. The company holds UK licences as well as Kenyan, Ugandan and Tanzanian approvals.

Reel's son, Hadib, has also joined the business, having qualified as an aeronautical engineer at Embry Riddle in Florida.

The engineers are able to carry out a quick change on the Excel. "It is quite amazing. In less than an hour we can go from blood and guts to champagne and canapés," Steve said.

Phoenix genuinely does not know where the next job is coming from. Steve's job title is managing director special projects. This has led to increased cooperation with governments in the region or through the UN.

The company has been involved with high-profile repatriation of hostages and many special medical evacuations. "We have had to work closely with special forces and the risks have been great, but we have a fantastic team of people," Steve said. "Life can be dangerous in the east African conflict areas and far riskier than Iraq or Afghanistan.

"Our pay-by-the-hour system will have saved hundreds of millions of dollars of cost, had the same operations been carried out by the military. And, so far, touch wood; we have never missed a flight.

"The focus and the strong quality and safety culture mean that our team of pilots is well trained and prepared for whatever the next call may bring."



Left: In the driving seat: Bill's car collection continues to win trophies for the former rally driver and pilot.

Above: Experienced engineers provide the MRO service for Phoenix customers across East Africa.

Parkinson's law of aviation...

Many people who enter the aviation industry have their heads stuck in the clouds – but for Bill Parkinson, chairman of Phoenix Aviation, he had his very firmly stuck in the railings.

As a four-year-old at the airport near his home in Newtownards, Northern Ireland, the young Parkinson managed to get his head stuck in the perimeter railings as he watched the aircraft, fascinated, until his mother was able to rescue him, along with the local fire brigade.

In 1953 the young Bill Parkinson moved to Kenya to join the police, where he rose through the ranks to a chief inspector.

Based close to Wilson Airport in Nairobi, he was given the opportunity to take up his childhood dream and learned to fly in a battered Tiger Moth

While continuing with his day job in the special branch, he obtained his commercial licence and then, after Kenya's independence, he left the police to join Bosky Aviation, one of the commercial operators on the Wilson airfield.



Although passionate about aviation, he was not single-minded. His love of cars saw him take up motor racing and rally driving, where he dominated the sport in the region, winning the east African championship on a number of occasions and finishing sixth in the world championships.

He also launched his own wine importing company and developed a skill for restoring classic cars – something he still does today (his Ford A won the Kenyan classic this year, while a recently restored Jaguar, and a Volkswagen Beetle, were also in the top four).

He became chief pilot at Bosky and, using his entrepreneurial skill, helped the operator grow his



Bill Parkinson: "We still pay a premium for being in Africa but so far so good."

business, so much so that the chairman of the company offered him a gift of stock in the company and to make him a partner. "Then his board told him he couldn't do it; I was angry and disappointed and so I left," Parkinson said. "I loved the business but I thought, I can do this for myself."

Parkinson, with his friend and engineer Sati Reel, launched Executive Air Services and Executive Jet Services to provide air charter and maintenance.

"We grew in two-and-a-half years from just two aircraft to 19. We were doing well and then caught the attention of some politicians. Basically, one minister decided he wanted 30% of the company. We refused. As a result, our licence was revoked. We had 45 million shillings worth of debt with Barclays and 19 aircraft that we couldn't fly.

"Barclays lent me more so I could pay off the small creditors and then we set about selling the aircraft. I sold 18 of them myself and paid back all of the Barclays loans. I just kept a Cessna 310 so as I could still fly."

Parkinson chuckles as he recalls what happened to the errant government minister. "He started his air operation and went bust within a year. It is not as easy as people think to run an aviation business."

Parkinson's children shared the aviation bug. Both

son Steve and daughter Ingrid learned to fly.

Ingrid Strahammer is now vice president, marketing for Phoenix in Europe, and Steve is director, special operations, after flying for Air Europe and Lauda Air before returning to Kenya to become chief pilot with British Airways' franchise, Regional Air, and then with Air Kenya.

In 1999, judging the time and the political climate was right to re-enter the aviation market, Parkinson and Reel created Phoenix Aviation.

It didn't take long before old contacts came back. An early charter included the president of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, for a special flight to Dar Es Salaam to attend the funeral of Julius Nyerere, the first president of Tanzania.



The company had successfully introduced the first jet for the east African charter market as part of the relaunch and the Parkinson father and son team had travelled to Wichita to bring back the first one, Citation Bravo 5Y-MNG, the last three letters being the initials of Steve, Sati and Bill's wives.

"We had Cessna finance and political risk insurance. It was all very expensive; probably double the world average," Parkinson recalled. "As we prepared to leave, the finance guy was there to wave us off. I opened the window and said, 'I hope you get to see us again'. You should have seen his face. I think they were worried about all that asset going off to Africa."

The fleet has grown to include Caravans, three more Bravos and an Excel and the company has two MD-83s that it has leased out.

"We still pay a premium for being in Africa but so far so good. We have a good record and although the margins are small we are growing," Parkinson said.

This Phoenix is certainly rising high.

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The cooperation between Abu Dhabi and the Seychelles takes a new turn – this time to business aviation. Marcelle Nethersole reports.

Right Royal treatment for Seychelles VIPs

Business aviation customers arriving and departing from The Seychelles now have a first class private lounge to utilise, thanks to cooperation between the UAE's top private aviation operator, Royal Jet, and Air Seychelles.

Together, they have launched a new FBO for business traffic to cater primarily to rising number of private aviation tourists from the Middle East, Europe and CIS countries.

In what is Royal Jet's first FBO operation outside of the Middle East, this inaugural facility in the Seychelles ushers in a new era for the private jet operator's FBO expertise, which showcases the demand for the high level of luxury and business aviation services beyond the UAE borders.

Air Seychelles has also taken over the commercial and operational management of the VIP lounge, located at the Seychelles International Airport. The lounge and the new FBO will be named 'Air Seychelles VIP'.



Royal Jet president and CEO Shane O'Hare said Air Seychelles VIP will provide year-round world-class bespoke luxury services to private aviation operators, VIP, corporate and leisure travellers.

"Working closely with Air Seychelles, Royal Jet will manage the FBO in line with what we currently offer to royalty, heads of state and VIP guests at our current FBO at Abu Dhabi International Airport. Our best practices over the years serving royalty will be replicated but will also provide the local touch that makes Seychelles hospitality distinctive," he said.

"Seychelles is increasingly becoming a year-long destination of choice for elite honeymooners, holiday seekers and leisure travellers, besides business travellers, and our FBO will provide them a service that will be unparalleled on the islands."

With tourism growth from the Middle East expected at an average 6% this year and growing numbers from Europe, the Far East, South Africa and Russia, Seychelles is fast becoming known as a high-end tourist destination.

Cramer Ball, Air Seychelles chief executive, said: "Air Seychelles VIP is the logical next step as we seek to diversify our business and attract new high-yielding tourism segments to our archipelago.

"Seychelles is fast becoming known as a high-end destination to a rising number of private aviation enthusiasts. Now, in partnership with Royal Jet, we have the capability to place our new FBO on the global map and market the Seychelles internationally in a new dimension."

Among the several services to be handled by Air Seychelles VIP will be landing permits, aircraft marshalling, 'follow me' service, red carpet, meet and assist, monitoring of air traffic control slots, communication of weather situation NOTAM, arrival and departure movement messages, arranging refuelling support and coordination with fuel suppliers, provision for use of a headset, start-up signal, and the provision of safety cones and chocks.



Other services will also include air-conditioning engineering and round-the-clock landing, parking and departure, with no slot restrictions.

All post and pre-flight procedures are available at the VIP terminal, including baggage claims, customs and immigration, check-in and security control. Transfer to and from the aircraft will be provided where required, by dedicated buggies.

The new VIP lounge boasts four executive rooms with a capacity for 55 guests and is equipped with free Wi-Fi service and cable television, hot and cold food, as well as a selection of beverages. It will also provide lounge hostess services, dedicated ramp staff, red carpet steps for the handling of VVIPs and diplomatic state guests on private jets, promotion of local culture and art on a 24-hour service, seven-days-a-week basis.

With at least three big hotels expected to open in 2014, no visa restrictions for holiday makers or for investment into new business on the islands, beautiful weather all year around and an easy-going lifestyle, Seychelles is attracting new guests besides regular visitors.

It's a snip: from left: Cramer Ball; Royal Jet board member HE Mohamed Ibrahim Al Mazroui; Joel Morgan, Air Seychelles board chairman; and Shane O'Hare cut the ribbon to launch Air Seychelles VIP.





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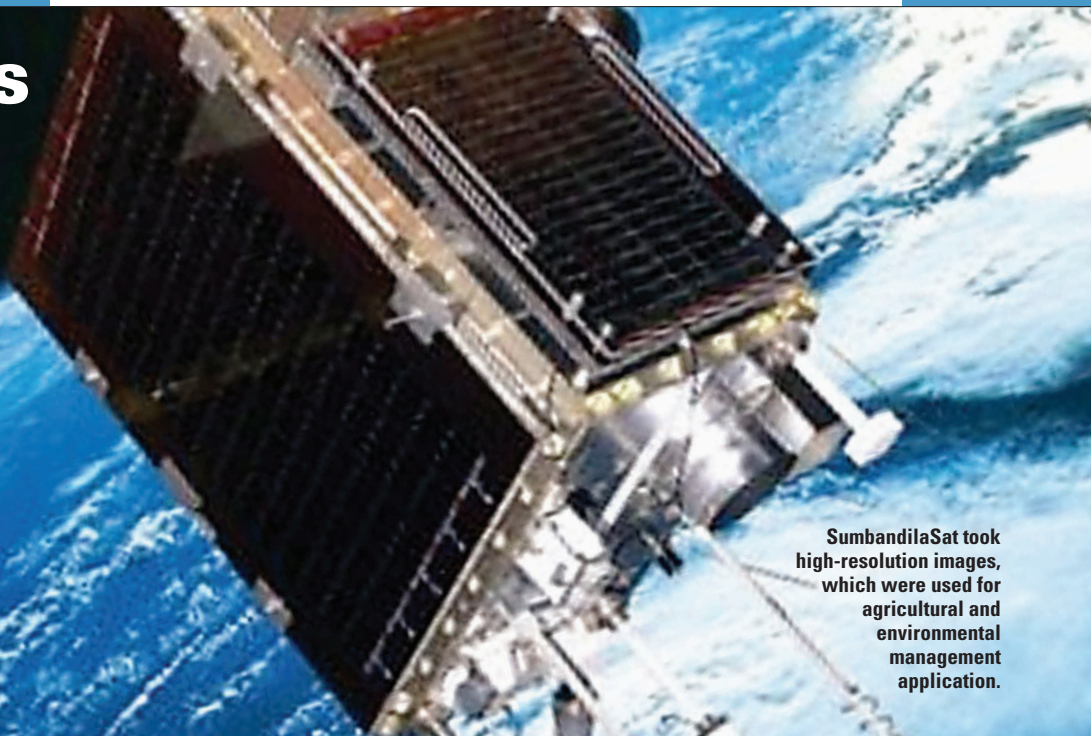
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Denel takes up the aerospace challenge



SumbandilaSat took high-resolution images, which were used for agricultural and environmental management application.

South Africa-based Denel Dynamics, which has a core business including tactical missiles, precision-guided weapons, unmanned aerial vehicle systems (UAVS), integrated air defence and related technology solutions, has launched a new space engineering division called Spaceteq.

Steve Nichols reports.

The new company – Spaceteq – forms part of Denel Dynamics, which has been exploring opportunities in satellite and space engineering in collaboration with the South African National Space Agency (SANSA) and the Departments of Science and Technology (DST) since 2011.

Riaz Saloojee, Denel Group CEO, said Spaceteq would strengthen the group's position as a leader in innovative and advanced aerospace systems and technology.

South Africa has identified space as one of the country's 'five grand challenges'. Its Departments of Science and Technology (DST) and Trade and Industry (DTI) see satellite production as a high-technology manufacturing niche that South Africa should be pursuing.

"Denel Spaceteq is well positioned to play a central role in this national strategy," said Saloojee.

Berthold Alheit, general manager of Denel Spaceteq, said its first project is to develop a multispectral, high-resolution, Earth observation satellite called EO-Sat1 for operation by SANSA by 2017. This satellite will be used in the areas of food security, urban planning and development, safety and security and support for disaster management.

SANSA is a bridge between its government, academia, schools, science councils, industry and the international space industry. It operates in a number of fields, including Earth observation (satellites), space operations (ground facilities and tracking), space science, space engineering, education and public engagement and human capital development.

"While the space domain is a new frontier for the African continent and for Denel Spaceteq, the time is right to market South Africa's strong engineering capability and our culture of cooperation internationally," said Alheit.

"Spaceteq's capabilities can be applied to the advancement of solving difficult and large engineering problems in the space arena."



Riaz Saloojee: Strengthen group's position.

Denel has key staff working for it with space experience on various programmes, as well as the Houwteq satellite test facility near Grabouw.

High-end engineers and scientists taken on by Denel from SunSpace brought with them capabilities gained via the South African Sunsat and SumbandilaSat programmes. The new EO-Sat1 will be based on the experience gained from the development of SumbandilaSat.

Sunsat, was launched into space in 1999 as a NASA-sponsored secondary payload on the rocket that delivered the much larger Argos satellite into orbit. The 64kg Sunsat micro-satellite was built by staff and students at the

University of Stellenbosch.

SumbandilaSat was launched in September 2009 aboard a Soyuz-2 launch vehicle from the Baikonur Cosmodrome. The first part of the name, Sumbandila, is from the Venda language and means 'lead the way'.

The satellite was positioned in a low Earth orbit (LEO) to enable it to take high-resolution images, which were used for agricultural and environmental management application. Technical difficulties were encountered in March 2010, but it provided images of the tsunami-affected port of Soma, Fukushima prefecture in north eastern Japan.

In 2012 SunSpace announced that the satellite had malfunctioned and was unlikely to be repairable.

Denel said that there would be other spin-off benefits from its space industry. South Africa's access to, and control over, its own satellites will ensure advanced surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities.

It also added that retaining and developing technology and engineering skills within the country's borders would have a much broader national technological benefit and inspire young talent in the fields of maths and science.

Denel Dynamics is situated in Irene, near Pretoria, and employs around 800 people.

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The emergence of former Soviet Union types, such as the Kamov-Ka, has led to the establishment of a growing number of maintenance bases.



SUPPORT ROTOR

No one is quite sure what the African helicopter maintenance business is worth. Some believe it could be in the region of \$1.2 billion per annum if the many offshore companies are considered.

Dan Brightman reports.

The African continent has some extreme operating conditions that combine hot and humid environments with heavy offshore duties. Indeed, the larger concentration of maintenance is carried out in support of west and southern African oil and gas exploration and drilling.

It is, therefore, unsurprising that some of the world's big names are to be found along the coast of Angola, and the Gulf of Guinea, where most major oil drilling companies have large rig investments.

By comparison, inland operators are relatively small in number with Kenya and South Africa dominating the industry among private owners and rotary-wing charter companies. Predictably, these regions have their own third-party maintenance providers, specialised in supporting Bell, Eurocopter and Robinson aircraft, as well as Agusta and Sikorsky.

With some 600 aircraft operating on the continent, half of them civilian, Russian-manufactured helicopters have become more

popular among some utility operators. While they have made few advances in the offshore industry, operators have been more willing to use them for search and rescue missions and long line work. Their use in the fire-fighting role has diminished because of crew language issues and their high operating costs. However, the emergence of former Soviet Union types has led to the establishment of a growing number of maintenance bases. One of them is South Africa-based Titan Helicopters, which flies all Mi-8 derivatives and coaxial Kamov aircraft.

The use of Russian helicopters in the humanitarian, fire-fighting and search and rescue role, has led the George-based company to obtain a South African Civil Aviation Authority approval to carry out both line and heavy maintenance to support its own fleet, rather than accomplish third-party work.

The self-maintenance route among operators is largely a consequence of the contract market, where exploration and United Nations and NGO work is tendered for

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as a turnkey operation, rather than these organisations purchasing their own aircraft.

The contracting operators not only transfer helicopters to operational areas, they embrace the entire operating framework including pilots, engineers and administration staff.

Titan Helicopters has maintenance bases in George and Cape Town in South Africa and in Namibia, as well as Malaysia and Israel. The company also supports a fleet of Sikorsky S76 and S61Ns, as well as a Eurocopter MBB 105 aircraft.

In March 2013, Johannesburg-based Denel Aviation announced it had been approved to carry out third-party maintenance on Russian helicopters. The company already maintained the South African Air Force's fleet of Oryx and Rooivalk rotary-wing aircraft and the adoption of a facility for Mi-8 derivatives was an indication that demand is increasing.

Although Denel doesn't disclose whose, the company says it has obtained 'accreditation' to support Russian helicopters in Africa and claims it is the first company to obtain this approval on the continent.

According to Denel's March 2013 press announcement, the facility, based at Johannesburg's OR Tambo International Airport, has signed its first customer – Cape Town-based Advanced Aviation Logistics South Africa (AAL-SA) – which is involved in oil exploration, fire-fighting and humanitarian operations and operates two Mi-8 derivatives.

While Africa does not suffer the world's worst weather conditions, a combination of lack of infrastructure, poor political stability and corruption make the continent a difficult environment in which to operate.

Nigeria's sizeable oil industry helicopter support base in Port Harcourt, for example, shares an airfield with the nation's air force. This, in itself, has given rise to operational problems, like the one occurring in May 2013 following the crash of an air force Mi35, which led to the temporary closure of the airport and commercial helibase.



Nigeria has many more than 100 helicopters on its register and the nation has been moving from a UK-styled maintenance programme to EASA-led standards. One of the more prolific operators is Bristow, which has experienced a number of Super Puma accidents over the years, including an offshore incident in Nigeria.

The controversial series of North Sea ditchings has led to substantive attention to helicopter maintenance and auditing standards. Despite the seemingly difficult operating environments, where many helicopters are exposed to an outdoor existence, maintenance standards are generally considered to be of a high standard. With tough working and living conditions for engineers and, indeed, for offshore oil rig workers, the petroleum

companies place huge pressure on maintenance divisions to keep a high standard.

Predictably, maintenance staff turnover is high. Port Harcourt, for instance, is not considered a plum posting, despite the good salaries offered to engineers and technicians.

Nigeria has on-going political issues that include hijackings and violent crime, which continues to discourage ex-pat staff from working in the country. As a response, Nigeria is making every effort to educate its own people and Bristow has encouraged Nigerians to take up an engineering career by sending candidates to the country's Nigerian College of Aviation Training in Zaria.

The company has also donated a helicopter to provide a practical item of training equipment. Some 12 engineering students are being trained a year by Bristow, according to its company spokesman, Femi Collins.

Although ex-pat maintenance engineers head for the Gulf of Guinea and Angola, staff rotation remains relatively high, with technicians working away from home for between 28 days and six week rotations.

The salaries however, tend to encourage at least a year or two away from home, leaving some nations short of skilled staff.

South Africa is one such example, where newly trained mechanics and technicians often seek better paying positions among the numerous offshore companies requiring satellite maintenance base staff.

SOMMAIRE

La maintenance des hélicoptères vers la croissance en Afrique

Personne ne peut affirmer à ce jour si la maintenance d'hélicoptères est une activité viable en Afrique. Selon les spécialistes, le chiffre d'affaires du secteur serait d'environ 1,2 milliard de dollars par an si l'on considère l'activité des nombreuses sociétés offshore.

Le continent africain connaît des conditions d'exploitation extrêmes pour les hélicoptères. La plus grande concentration d'activités de maintenance se situe en Afrique du sud et de l'ouest en support des industries d'extraction de gaz ou de forage de pétrole.

On dénombre quelque 600 hélicoptères opérant en Afrique dont la moitié à usage civil. Les hélicoptères civils russes sont devenus plus populaires parmi les opérateurs du service public. Ils sont utilisés pour des missions humanitaires, de recherches ou de sauvetages et dans la lutte contre les incendies. Ils sont soumis à l'obtention d'une approbation de l'aviation civile sud-africaine et préfèrent réaliser eux-mêmes la MRO incluant la formation de leurs pilotes, ingénieurs et personnels administratifs. Denel Aviation a d'ailleurs annoncé en mars 2013, l'obtention d'une licence pour assurer la MRO d'hélicoptères russes.

L'Afrique reste toutefois un environnement difficile

pour les opérateurs de la MRO avec un manque d'infrastructures et de stabilité politique ou encore une corruption considérable. Les entreprises opérant dans de nombreux pays africains doivent faire face à cette corruption, qui peut bloquer la mise en place d'un centre de maintenance, d'opérateurs du tourisme ou de VIP ou encore les permis de travail d'ingénieurs et de techniciens expérimentés, pour favoriser l'embauche de personnels locaux.



La rotation du personnel reste également élevée et il existe un manque cruel de main-d'œuvre qualifiée dans plusieurs régions. Le travail et les conditions de vie pour les ingénieurs demeurent durs surtout que les compagnies pétrolières exercent également une pression sur les acteurs de la MRO afin de maintenir un niveau élevé.

Le Nigéria compte plus de 100 hélicoptères sur son registre et développe des programmes de maintenance conformes aux normes de l'AESA. Port Harcourt n'est pas encore par exemple un endroit idéal pour travailler malgré les bons salaires offerts aux ingénieurs et techniciens. Le Nigéria connaît des problèmes politiques et doit faire face à des crimes atroces et à des prises d'otages, ce qui décourage le personnel expatrié. Le Nigéria fait des efforts et encourage ses étudiants à se former et mener des carrières de techniciens et d'ingénieurs.

Il existe une base importante d'hélicoptères au large de l'Angola situé à Malongo. Elle dispose d'un héliport à 20 kilomètres au nord de Cabinda. Il y a aussi d'autres plus petites bases dans le Golfe de Guinée avec des opérations menées de Malabo et certaines opérations au large du Ghana.

Le nombre des petits opérateurs augmente également sur le marché. Mais leur fonctionnement

Angola's central offshore helicopter base is located at Malongo, which has a 15-pad heliport about 20km north of Cabinda. Helicopter operations are contracted to several companies, but the region's oil-rig support operators are dominated by Sonair and Chevron via joint management company, Heli-Malongo.

There are also other smaller bases in the Gulf of Guinea, with operations being carried out from Malabo, in Equatorial Guinea, and some offshore operations in Ghana, which is home to some 20 helicopters. Equatorial Guinea is now Africa's third largest oil producer.

Sudan remains highly unstable for the handful of companies willing to risk staff and assets in support of the oil drilling operations in the volatile area.

However, oil discoveries continue. Between 2009 and the end of 2012, southern Africa accounted for 24, with 13 new fields discovered in west Africa and eight in east Africa. Exploration activity has been recently opened up in both Moçambique and Namibia.

Although the world's largest oil support operators are to be found in Africa, South African companies are becoming more active in the region. As helicopter companies tender their services, mostly for inland operations, licensing and certification authorities are being stretched to the limit in providing staff to take on off-base inspections.

The country's largely political efforts to

replace skilled inspectors with inexperienced personnel is having a negative effect with operators struggling to get inspectors to visit and sign off their satellite facilities.

Companies operating in many African states have to contend with rampant corruption, that can prevent the simple establishment of a maintenance base by the refusal to issue work permits.

Tourism or VIP operations can be set up but some African nations make it difficult to obtain experienced engineers by insisting companies take on indigenous maintenance technicians.

South Africa allows operators a 90-day period before an initial maintenance base inspection. Moreover, costs escalate as operators are obliged to pay for the inspectors to conduct site visits.

Type-certified technicians that have an 'open licence' to sign out various aircraft, for instance, an entire Bell Helicopter range, can cost the operator \$800.00 per day in basic fees, not including expenses.

While there has been an increase in smaller operators entering the sub-Saharan African market, some of the costs are prohibitive.

Reliably operating off-base aircraft singly is a big challenge and small companies tend not to have the wherewithal to tender for large contracts, making entry into the market difficult without considerable capital investment.

Engine and transmission exceedances are not unheard of and, when they happen, operators need to have access to spare major components like powerplants. Parts have to be quickly despatched with an aircraft-on-ground helicopter, often motivating an operator to place two aircraft on contract when only one is needed.



While EASA-mandated maintenance programmes tend to dominate African helicopter servicing, most nations allow foreign-registered aircraft to operate under their own maintenance protocols. Aircraft types vary with Bell, Sikorsky and Agusta Westland found in almost all oil-producing nations.

The tightening up of both commercial, business and private helicopter maintenance is leading to a greater adoption of aircraft management businesses. While this has become accepted practice among many business jet owners and operators, the rotary-wing industry is slowly falling into step.

Africa's helicopter maintenance industry can only grow as alternative energy resources are uncovered. As the world economy moves slowly out of its lengthy recession, there will be a greater call for technical expertise in both shop floor and management skills. It's an area that is certain to grow, despite the difficult operating environments.

A change to EASA standards in Nigeria following a Bristow Super Puma crash by its offshore industry. Inset: South Africa's Titan Helicopters operates a family of Mi-8 aircraft.



fiable pour répondre aux appels d'offres demeurent un grand défi. Ces petites entités ont tendance à ne pas avoir les moyens pour décrocher de nombreux contrats et de pénétrer le marché sans procéder à des investissements considérables.

Même si les appels d'offres et les contrats de maintenance d'hélicoptères sont réalisés selon les normes de l'AESA en Afrique, la plupart des pays permettent à un hélicoptère immatriculé à l'étranger d'opérer sous leurs propres protocoles de maintenance. C'est le cas d'hélicoptères Bell,

Sikorsky ou Agusta Westland que l'on trouve dans la plupart des pays producteurs de pétrole.

L'industrie de maintenance des hélicoptères en Afrique ne peut que croître surtout face à l'incertitude autour des ressources alternatives d'énergie. Malgré une conjoncture économique mondiale morose et un environnement difficile, le besoin en expertise technique et de gestion des compétences dans le domaine de la MRO se fera toujours sentir. Et des perspectives existent en Afrique.

Travel across Somalia, the world's most failed state, is slow and dangerous. A plucky local fleet is changing all that. Sean Williams travels with Jubba, the country's 'unofficial national carrier'.

MISSION IMPASSABLE

The car whacks a pothole, lurches sideways and turns 360 degrees, spits and hops on to two wheels before landing, with a gasp, on all fours. This is the “best road in Somalia”, my driver tells me. “But,” he adds, “roads in this place are like the moon.”

It's of little surprise that Somalis are turning to the skies to traverse their embattled nation. There are very few paved roads in the country (Hargeisa, the second-largest city and capital of northern breakaway state Somaliland, has just one tarmacked street) and dusty tracks are a tangle of hatchbacks, giant 4x4s and donkey-drawn carts.

Only around 10% of all roads in Somalia are paved. Drivers must also travel with a police escort to pass through countless checkpoints, manned by the nation's underpaid and overzealous patrolmen.

Roadside bombs have also become a favoured tool of death for Al-Shabaab, the Al Qaeda-affiliated group that controls vast swathes of Somalia, as its campaign has been reduced to civilian-targeted guerrilla attacks. Somalia, it's safe to say, has earned its title as the world's most failed state.

Impassable roads, though, are good business for Abdullahi Warsame, managing director of Jubba Airways. Under his stewardship, the small firm has become known as Somalia's 'unofficial

It's of little surprise that Somalis are turning to the skies to traverse their embattled nation. There are very few paved roads in the country and dusty tracks are a tangle of hatchbacks, giant 4x4s and donkey-drawn carts.

national carrier', and Warsame is already looking to expand a destination list that spans all of the major cities in Somalia, as well as Djibouti, Dubai, Jeddah and Nairobi.

It is the latter, Kenya's sprawling capital, where Jubba is registered. Moving the firm's registration from Somalia to Kenya was one of Warsame's first tasks – “a very difficult one” – after he assumed the role in 2003.

Following the collapse of Mohamed Siad Barre's brutal regime in 1991, and a subsequent civil conflict that lingers to this day, airlines registered in the country were not permitted to land anywhere else.

Now, though, Jubba is thriving. Its flights are booked at 85% capacity and, Warsame claims; the company is turning a small profit – not too shabby in a region overrun by terrorists and corruption.

The company, which still does not own a single plane (Warsame plans to add his first this year), runs a fleet of four Boeing 737s and three Antonov AN24s, the latter of whose ancient Soviet controls are best handled by Jubba's high number of Russian and Ukrainian pilots.

Leases for the Antonovs run at \$80,000 a month; the Boeings \$400,000 a month. “They are tough planes,” Warsame said; alluding to their deference at diving into Mogadishu, Somalia's war-zone capital city, at perilously steep angles

owing to the locals' penchant for rocket-propelled grenades and the use of AK47s.

Mogadishu was home to the infamous Black Hawk Down battle that claimed two American helicopters and 18 US lives in 1993. Entire suburbs are still the domain of Al-Shabaab.

High lease costs – and high costs overall – are not uniquely a Somali problem. Were Warsame chief of a European carrier, his Boeings would set him back just \$180,000 a month. Open skies treaties, though official, are (like so much legislation in east Africa) scantily followed.



In fact, Kenya's Civil Aviation Authority, in particular, has backed government support of struggling national carriers. African Express, also headquartered in Nairobi, is one of Jubba's regional competitors – as are Daallo and Ethiopian Airlines. Once Jubba, braving wartime Somalia, had a monopoly on its routes. No more.

Somalia may not be 'safe' in the truest sense of the word, in our lifetime. But a safer Horn of Africa is drawing people back to business in the region, as well as the hundreds of thousands who fled to all corners of the world. And most of them are using Jubba to get home, trusting it as 'their' airline.

On a flight from Nairobi to Berbera, a northern port town a three-hour drive from Hargeisa – via Mogadishu – I meet a Kenya-based trader called Mohamoud Allarte. “This is home to me now,” he said as seats quickly fill around us. “Jubba has been there from the start. That was tough to do.”

African demand for international travel has risen 7.5% this past year, well above the global



This year Al-Shabaab has stepped up its campaign of terror, setting off bombs and striking major targets in Mogadishu and beyond. Landing in Mogadishu still feels like landing in the theatre of war.

average of 6%. Africa's GDP is set to rise another 6% this year, too: the need to cross Somalia's ravaged but rebuilding regions is growing steadily.

Success, though, does not preclude a customer experience of note. The trip costs me \$450 return and is packed, it transpires, beyond capacity. A gaggle of gregarious religious speakers, on their way to an Islamic conference in Hargeisa, does not help: most want to sit next to and debate with a new friend. Chaos ensues.

Eventually, with the plane's small staff of Kenyans (staff nationality is mandated by Kenyan authorities) looking slightly worse for wear, we're off. The seats are old and small but service is prompt. Schedules, however, are next-to-useless. My trip from Kenya to Somaliland is set to take four hours. In reality it takes six. The ribbon of military vehicles around Mogadishu's Aden Adde Airport is a big clue as to why.



The return leg, because of Kenyan security fears, must touch down at Wajir, an ochre-soaked settlement just west of the Somali border, where our old Boeing sits beside copters and jet fighters ready to be scrambled at a moment's notice. Every passenger must endure a full security check, sat in queues for most of the time in the soggy humidity of the Kenyan scrub. In total the trip lasts ten hours. It should have been four-and-a-half.

That doesn't stop Kenya's 400,000 Somali expats from preferring to ride with Jubba. "It's the easiest way to get from A to B, then C and

maybe even D (flights stop off at several points before reaching Saudi and the UAE – it's as close to a 'sky bus' as I've encountered)," said Nur Hassan, a Somali journalist exiled after repeated death threats from Al-Shabaab.

Easy, however, is not a word common to Warsame, who has found the stigma of his nationality difficult to overcome. It has been "impossible" to get loans, he said, and destinations are loath to allow anything Somali into their territory, such is public and private antipathy to the country.

There have also been setbacks. Despite Jubba's assertion that it has a 'zero accident credential' one of its planes did crash last April, the pilot flipping his charge on the strip at Galkayo, a city in the central north of Somalia, after avoiding a goat. No one, miraculously, was killed. Still, it's a little rich to claim that a flipped plane does not constitute an accident – and the pilot is no longer a Jubba employee.

There is also the rather large issue of Somali security. This year Al-Shabaab has stepped up its campaign of terror, setting off bombs and striking major targets in Mogadishu and beyond. Médecins Sans Frontières has left the country because of its fading security, and the African Union is beefing up its numbers in anticipation of further bloodshed. Landing in Mogadishu still feels like landing in the theatre of war.

The city's airport, many analysts agree, is Shabaab's biggest target: a gateway through

which Somalia's flailing government receives military, monetary and edible aid. The UN compound in which 15 perished in June sits almost next door to the runway. War carries other risks, too: recently an

Ethiopian cargo plane full of ammunition exploded on the runway. Four died.

Kismayo, a big city near the Kenyan border (and part of the perilous Jubbaland region for which Jubba is named), has recently deteriorated into all-out conflict, too: Somalia is a nation, it seems, by name only.

Jubba, thankfully, escaped the giant fire, which tore through Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta Airport late last year. And Warsame, buoyed by Jubba's many recent successes, is keen to expand the company's profile. He already has Uganda's capital city Kampala in his sights, and the Ethiopian metropolis of Addis Ababa – a move which would pit Jubba directly against its bigger competitor, Ethiopian Airlines.

The Hajj is coming in October and Warsame says that in religiously devout Somalia, making weekly journeys from Mogadishu to Jeddah helps boost trade greatly.

But why be bothered about competition when you've been flying over a war-torn nation for more than 15 years? Jubba might not be the definitive 'happy way to fly', as its baby-blue motto suggests. But it's probably the happiest way of getting across a country where sadness still reigns.

Djibouti has high hopes of leveraging its airport and sea port to take advantage of recent trends in multi-modal cargo shipping. **Tom Pleasance reports.**

Djibouti: The gateway to Africa?

Djibouti may be small – fewer than one million people – but the Horn of Africa country has plans to develop itself into a sea-air cargo hub for landlocked countries in the region, such as neighbouring Ethiopia.

“We can connect the Far East to Africa and the rest of the world,” said Moussa Houssein Doualeh, cargo manager at Djibouti-Ambouli International Airport. “This is our dream.”

The key to the plan is exploiting Djibouti’s fortunate location and the rising use of mixed-mode transportation of cargo. Air cargo is much faster than sea, but it is correspondingly more expensive. With manufacturers eager to cut costs during the global recession, they have discovered increasingly sophisticated techniques for sending cargo either in waves of air first then sea, or mixing it so that it goes only part of the way by sea and then the rest by air. The solution is rapidly gaining advocates and that makes places with both good sea and air access suddenly very useful.

Djibouti sits at the mouth of the Red Sea, with approximately 65% of the world’s commercial shipping fleet using its territorial waters. This makes its sea ports a vital outlet for regional transshipment. With the growing use of air as part of that, the airport is seeing some growth, but wants to develop that far more.

“Sea-air is our target,” said Doualeh. “We are already working on ensuring incoming transshipments between the seaports to the airport take [fewer] than 48 hours, but we need some professional logistics people to help us.”

The airport’s air cargo operations are small – only 3,000 tonnes per year – but it has some heavy hitters flying freighters into it: Etihad and Emirates. Etihad flies in twice a week with an A330 for both Djibouti and Somalia, while Emirates flies a 777 every Saturday.

The next big operator will be Ethiopian Airlines, which is already planning on exploiting the sea-air model through Djibouti.

“Everything going to Ethiopia comes through Djibouti,” said Doualeh. “Eighty million people are being fed by road. We are a very small country, but our seaport is one of the best in the region. We are trying to save time for the shippers, the transporters and the customers. We

are working with the seaport to see how we can bring things along with this sea and air movement.”

In April last year, Ethiopian Airlines signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the airport to do exactly that.

“As the largest air cargo service provider in Africa, we are a serious player in moving trade, commerce and investment, which are the engines of fast economic development in the continent,” said Tewolde Gebremariam, CEO of Ethiopian, in a statement at the time. “The cooperation framework with our long-time partner, Djibouti Airport, will enable us to offer a new menu of choice, sea-air multimodal transport services, to our shippers, forwarders, and logistics providers in Africa.”



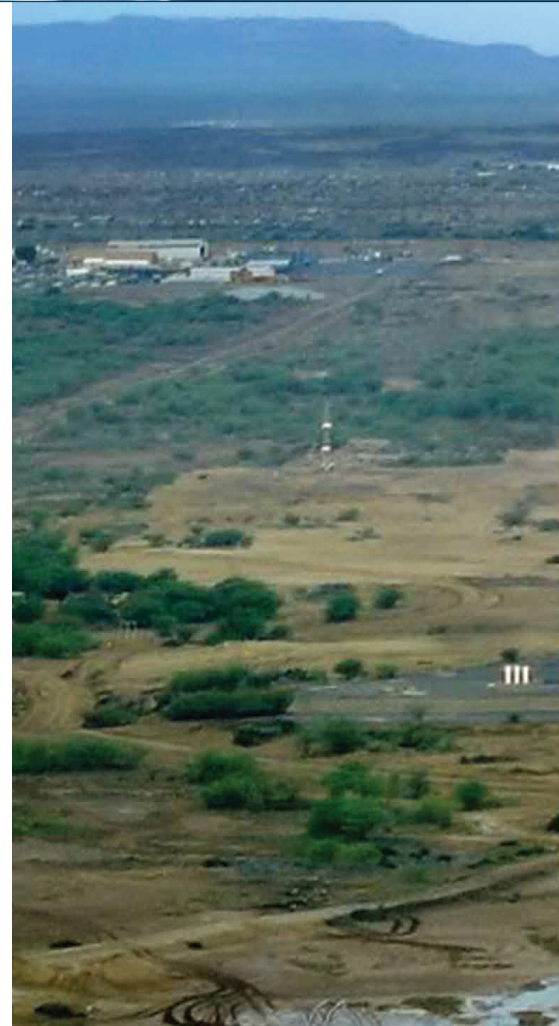
To encourage more airlines to do the same, the Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority has plans for a US\$5.88 billion investment to expand connections between the airport and the Doraleh Container Terminal, which itself will have its capacity boosted up to three million containers per year by 2015, double its current capability.

Already the fifth-largest container port in Africa by capacity, this expansion would make it the largest on the continent, leapfrogging Port Said and Damietta in Egypt, Tangiers in Morocco and Durban in South Africa, which is already moving forward its own ambitious sea-air projects.

On top of that development, Aboubaker Omar Hadi, chairman of the Djibouti Ports & Free Zones Authority, says the country will start building a new airport later this year, to open in 2016.

“The airport will be 25km from our capital... and have a state-of-the-art air cargo village to prepare ourselves for the expected increased demand.

“We need to develop the sea-air cargo business to serve landlocked east African countries and far away west African countries. These currently have to endure unreasonable transit times,” he explained. “This has been handicapping the business community for many years and the



development of sea-air cargo services, especially for high-value goods, will be a great solution.”

Currently, a container shipped from Shanghai to Abuja, Nigeria, can take up to three months while a sea-air option trans-shipped in Djibouti takes a maximum of 18 days. With the recent advances in cool-chain containers, this also allows for certain perishables – fresh food – to be sent this way.

“Trade to and from African countries is increasing rapidly,” added Hadi. “All [those] involved in air cargo logistics should take advantage of this untouched, yet vast, potential for growth.”

However, Djibouti Airport’s cargo facilities “do not answer all the requirements”, Doualeh admits and it only has one runway, which it shares with the nearby US military base. The new airport will certainly help, but in the meantime a 4,000sqft warehouse with cold-storage capabilities will open later this year.

Nonetheless, Doualeh is confident that businesses will soon see the cost advantage of flying into Djibouti instead of Dubai, only a short-haul flight away. In the mean time, he is still looking for companies willing to make his dream a reality.



Final approach to Djibouti Airport.
Top: The airy terminal building.
Above: The gate guard is a part of Djibouti's charm.

SOMMAIRE

Djibouti : une porte d'entrée sur l'Afrique?

Djibouti place de grands espoirs dans le développement de ses infrastructures portuaires et aéroportuaires afin de profiter des nouveaux modes opératoires de l'industrie du fret.

Djibouti est certes petit en superficie mais il projette de devenir une véritable plaque tournante du fret maritime et aérien pour soutenir les pays enclavés de la région comme l'Éthiopie. Il est situé à l'embouchure de la mer Rouge et environ 65% de la flotte de la navigation commerciale du monde utilise ses eaux territoriales. Les ports maritimes de Djibouti sont ainsi vitaux pour le transbordement régional.

« Nous pouvons et voulons connecter l'Extrême-Orient à l'Afrique et au reste du monde », déclare Moussa Houssein Doualeh, directeur du fret à l'aéroport international de Djibouti-Ambouli.

L'objectif est donc de tirer profit du positionnement stratégique de Djibouti et d'exploiter les nouvelles tendances opératoires du fret alliant air et mer pour réduire les coûts et les délais d'acheminement.

« Nous œuvrons pour assurer les transbordements entre les ports maritimes et l'aéroport en moins de 48 heures mais nous avons besoin de professionnels de la logistique pour nous épauler », ajoute Moussa Houssein Doualeh.

Les opérations de fret aérien de Djibouti restent modestes avec environ 3.000 tonnes par an mais de grandes compagnies aériennes comme Etihad et Emirates sont déjà présentes. Ethiopian Airlines qui sera le prochain grand opérateur envisage déjà des opérations de fret air-mer via Djibouti.

« En tant que principal pourvoyeur de services de fret aérien en Afrique, nous sommes un acteur incontournable dans le commerce et l'investissement qui sont les moteurs du développement économique du continent », affirme Te wolde Gebremariam, directeur général d'Ethiopian. « La structure de coopération avec notre partenaire de longue date, l'aéroport de Djibouti, nous permettra d'offrir une nouvelle gamme de services de transport air-mer à nos expéditeurs, nos transitaires et aux opérateurs de logistique en Afrique. »

Les autorités portuaires de Djibouti veulent encourager cette pratique; Elles prévoient ainsi des investissements de 5,88 milliards de dollars pour développer les connexions entre l'aéroport et le terminal à conteneurs de Doraleh.

Aboubaker Omar Hadi, président des ports et des zones franches de Djibouti, annonce pour sa part que la construction d'un nouvel aéroport commencera d'ici peu pour une ouverture en 2016. Il souhaite développer l'activité cargo alliant mer-air qui permettra de stimuler les affaires et de donner un support aux pays enclavés d'Afrique orientale et de l'ouest. Le commerce augmente rapidement et les opérateurs de logistique et de fret aérien devraient profiter de ce potentiel de croissance.

Actuellement, un conteneur expédié de Shanghai à Abuja (Nigeria) peut prendre jusqu'à trois mois, tandis que l'option fret air-mer via Djibouti prend au maximum 18 jours.

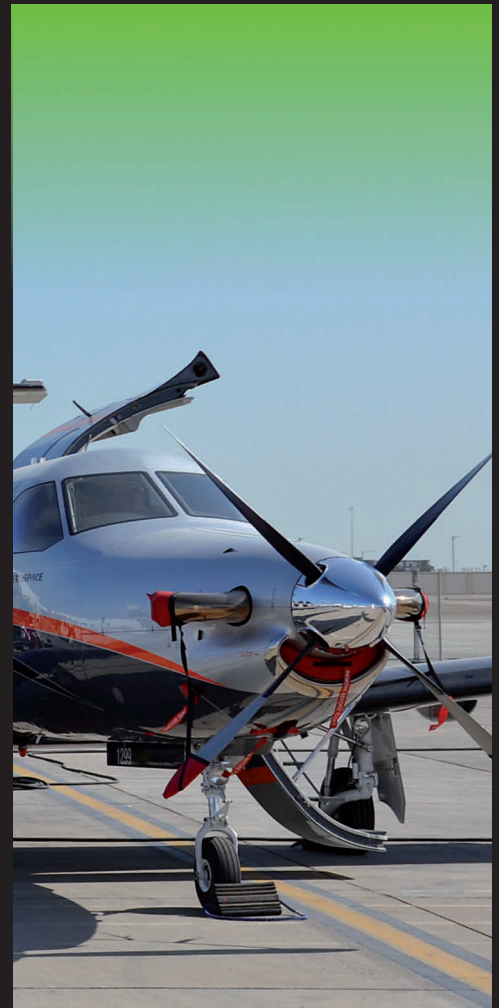
Moussa Houssein Doualeh estime que les infrastructures existantes ne répondent pas à toutes les exigences. Le nouvel aéroport sera un atout certes. Entretemps, un entrepôt muni de chambres froides ouvrira ses portes cette année. Il reste convaincu que les opérateurs de fret découvriront prochainement les avantages d'opérer des vols court courrier vers Djibouti.



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Members from the US services and French Foreign Legion stationed at Camp Lemonnier prepare to land after parachuting from a plane during training on equipment familiarisation and parachuting technique.



Why the US is pulling the strings in Djibouti

US military involvement in Africa is growing, with its main base in Djibouti increasingly being supplemented by a series of discreet aviation facilities opening around the continent to tackle insurgents. Alan Dron reports.

A decade ago, Djibouti was a largely overlooked corner of the world. The tiny, former French colony with an arid landscape and few natural resources, had been further impoverished by four years of civil war between the rival Afar and Issa tribes in the early 1990s.

To keep the two sides apart, France had installed peacekeeping troops in 1992. From as long ago as 1948, the most important military installation in the country was the Armée de l'Air's Base Aérienne 188 (BA 188), on the site of what is now Djibouti's Ambouli International Airport.

An African backwater, it was for many years, the place where old French military aircraft spent the declining years of their operational lives; it was the last outpost of the North American F-100 Super Sabre (which finally ended its front-line service in 1978) and the Mirage III, a decade later.

All that changed after the September 11 2001 attacks on the US, although the 1998 bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam had already brought east Africa on to the US radar screen.

In September 2002, some 900 US troops set up camp in support of the US-led war on terror. Their initially temporary base grew into what is today known as Camp Lemonnier, with around 2,000 personnel, the largest single US military presence in Africa and the main operating base for US Africa Command (AFRICOM).

Djibouti's attraction for the US lies in its strategic location. To the south lies Somalia, a failed state where Islamic militants of Al-Shabaab have been trying to establish a Sharia-based state and from where pirates prey on international shipping in the Indian Ocean. African troops, with support from western nations, have been pushing them slowly back south from the capital, Mogadishu, but the country remains fragile.

To the northeast, less than 30km from the Djibouti coast at its closest point across

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HORN OF AFRICA



Left: More than 2000 US troops are in Djibouti and American transporters are frequent visitors Right: A Pilatus PC-12/U-28A receives attention at Niamey, the capital of Niger, site of a small US military detachment. Although it carries a civilian paint scheme, it carries a military-style serial on the fin. Its civilian appearance allows it to move around African airports without attracting undue attention.

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the straits at the southern exit to the Red Sea, lies Yemen, heartland of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), which is waging a campaign against the central government in Sana'a.

To the north, beyond Eritrea, lies Sudan, with whose government the US has been at loggerheads for years and which, allegedly, acts as a conduit for Iranian weaponry.

So, geographic position alone makes Djibouti a location of interest for the US.

France also maintains a sizeable military presence in the small nation, with some 1,900 military personnel and (as of spring 2013) seven Mirage 2000s, a Transall C160 medium transport aircraft and a handful of Puma and Gazelle helicopters. Missions include anti-piracy sorties, co-operation with regional militaries and the African Union.

Perhaps understandably, the United States does not release much operational information on its activities at Camp Lemonnier, although it does publicise assistance to African militaries and cooperation with the French forces in Djibouti.

The curtain on US operations was briefly pulled aside last year following the crash, some 9km southwest of Djibouti-Ambouli Airport, of a US Air Force U-28A aircraft, killing all four crew members.

The little-known U-28A is a militarised version of the Pilatus PC-12 turboprop, more commonly used in civilian service as a small executive or freight aircraft carrying up to nine people. The UC-28A operates in support of special operations forces, providing tactical airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities. Examples tend to operate with minimal markings, apart from a small US flag on the fin.

US Special Operations Command said in the subsequent accident report that the U-28A, from

the 34th Special Operations Squadron headquartered at Hurlburt Field, Florida, had been outfitted with electro-optical sensors and advanced communications and navigation equipment, giving it the ability to stream data and full-motion video.

The aircraft, call sign Ratchet 33, had been returning to Djibouti at night after a five-hour mission over an unspecified area, when it entered a steepening dive while awaiting permission to land. The accident investigation put the cause down to spatial disorientation of the pilot.

The U-28A is a regular resident at Camp Lemonnier, usually attached to the 34th Expeditionary Special Operations Squadron. Go to Google maps on the internet and choose 'satellite' view of Djibouti's airport. Camp Lemonnier lies to the south of the main runway. Below the westerly end of the main runway, barely noticeable against a U-shaped expanse of paler concrete hard-standing, can be seen three UC-28s.



Further evidence of the scale of the US involvement in Djibouti is close by. Three CH-53 heavy-lift helicopters and three C-130 Hercules, of various versions, can also be seen, together with a single example of a Beech King Air 350 – almost certainly an MC-12 from the 'project liberty' fleet of 30-plus intelligence-gathering aircraft.

The US Air Force describes the MC-12 as a medium- to low-altitude platform that supplies ISR information directly to ground forces.

The MC-12W is not just an aircraft, but also a complete collection, processing, analysis and dissemination system. A fully operational system consists of a modified aircraft with sensors, a ground exploitation cell, line-of-sight and

satellite communications datalinks, along with a robust voice communications suite.

The aircraft is equipped with an electro-optical infrared (EO/IR) sensor and other sensors as the mission requires. The EO/IR sensor also includes a laser illuminator and designator in a single sensor package.

The MC-12 capability supports all aspects of the air force irregular warfare mission (counter insurgency, foreign internal defence and building partnership capacity).

Move further east, to the apron at the far end of Camp Lemonnier, and heavier military hardware can be found. Apart from a further C-130 and two P-3 Orions, there stand eight F-15 Eagles.

According to Italian aviation analyst and blogger David Cenciotti, the USAF has been deploying the F-15E Strike Eagle to Djibouti for several years now. The obvious question is what exactly the type is doing there. Djibouti is not impossibly distant from Iran, especially if air-to-air refuelling is available, but there are far more convenient friendly airfields on the western side of the Arabian Gulf from which to base aircraft that might be required to fly missions against Iran.

There have been reports that the Strike Eagles have complemented armed MQ-9 Reaper UAVs in conducting strikes against Al-Shabaab in Somalia and AQAP in Yemen.

Evidence for this remains circumstantial. Cenciotti points out, for example, that strikes by aircraft on Yemeni insurgents in 2012 took place when Yemen's own air force was grounded through an industrial dispute involving its pilots and ground crews. Yemeni officials also told CNN last year that the US had conducted strikes in their country. The respected *Washington Post* carried a report in June 2012 that both drones and F-15s had been in action over Yemen and Somalia.

And Wikileaks has published US diplomatic cables quoting Yemen's former president, Ali



Right: A U.S. Marine Corps KC-130J Super Hercules aircraft with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron (VMGR) 352 refuels a French air force Dassault Mirage 2000-5 aircraft during a refueling training mission over Djibouti. The mission was intended to improve interoperability between U.S. and French forces.

PICTURE BY SGT. JOSEPH MCKEE.

Abdullah Saleh, as agreeing to a proposal that: “US fixed-wing bombers circle out of sight outside Yemeni territory ready to engage AQAP targets should actionable intelligence become available”.

Professor David Francis of Bradford University’s School of Social and International Studies in the UK, says that stories of US UAV and manned aircraft involvement in strikes against ground targets are common, but that no hard evidence exists to support them.

“Military-related research colleagues in Somalia, Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia, all confirm the use of US drones in this area against Islamic militants, but do not, or are unwilling to, provide evidence,” he said.

However, US military involvement in Africa does not always carry ‘stars and bars’ on its wings. In April this year, the US Transportation Command (US TRANSCOM) published an invitation for civilian operators to provide aircraft to operate out of Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso.

Under the title ‘Trans Sahara Short Take-Off & Landing Airlift Support’ the tender made instructive reading. Among the duties required were casualty evacuation, personnel airlift (‘passengers will possibly travel with personal weapons and small amounts of ammunition’), the ability to para-drop personnel and cargo and be capable of delivering up to 1000 flight hours per month.

The aircraft had to be multi-engine, capable of carrying a minimum of six passengers and supervision of various aspects of the service would be undertaken by Special Operations Command Africa. Personnel had to be US citizens.

The aircraft had to be capable of using austere forward operating locations. “While the US Government does not anticipate a change of base location, events could arise that would

require a rapid relocation to a new base of operations,” said the document. “The contractor shall be prepared to relocate all contractor-provided assets and personnel in theatre associated with this contract within 40 days of notice.”

The geographic area that these flights were to cover was huge. “The primary operating area includes, but is not limited to, the recognised political boundaries of Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, South Sudan, Tunisia, and Uganda, as dictated by operational requirements,” said the document.



One additional requirement was that the aircraft had to be capable of landing and taking off from short, unlit airstrips at night, using night vision equipment.

The contract award was due to be made in August and last up to the end of 2017, if various options to extend the initial 10.5 month contract were taken up.

The benefits of using smaller aircraft rather than the traditional mainstay of US military transport units, the C-130 Hercules, are that they can use smaller, more austere airstrips than even the C-130 can operate into and they tend to attract less attention than large military aircraft.

According to the *Washington Post*, in another report earlier last year, since at least 2009, the “practice of hiring private companies to spy on huge expanses of African territory... has been a cornerstone of the US military’s secret activities on the continent”.

Under the project name Tusker Sand, this

US military involvement in Africa does not always carry ‘stars and bars’ on its wings.

consisted of contractors flying from Entebbe airport in Uganda and various other airfields, using discreet white-painted Pilatus PC-12s with no markings other than US registrations. These aircraft were carrying sophisticated surveillance equipment in the search for the insurgent Lord’s Resistance Army, which has terrorised Uganda and surrounding countries for years.

The *Washington Post* also reported that US drones were being flown out of Arba Minch airport in Ethiopia.

According to the newspaper, citing a former US commander who had helped set them up, there were about a dozen facilities around the continent, usually located in discreet hangars on existing civilian airports or military airbases.

Meanwhile in February last year, President Obama informed the US Congress in a letter that around 100 US troops were being stationed in Niamey, the Nigerian capital.

Expanding on the president’s announcement, an AFRICOM spokesman told *The New York Times* that “Africa Command has positioned unarmed remotely piloted aircraft in Niger to support a range of regional security missions and engagements with partner nations.”

According to other US officials, the Predator drones would be unarmed and fly only on surveillance missions, although they did not rule out conducting missile strikes at some point if the threat worsened.

The need for ISR missions in west Africa has increased recently with the attempt by Islamist guerrillas to exert control over Mali – an attempt beaten back by a combination of French, Chadian and Malian troops last year – and the increasing presence of the Islamist Boko Haram movement in northern Nigeria.



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An Ethiopian Fokker 50 waiting to board passengers at Hargeisa.



Egal has landed... and so has Berbera

Somaliland recently saw the refurbishment of its main airports. In an exclusive interview with the director general at the ministry of civil aviation of Somaliland, Keith Mwanalushi reports that the airports are now ready to do business.

Somaliland has been campaigning to achieve international recognition as an independent state for several years and there has been a deliberate move to upgrade the airport system in order to provide the necessary connectivity that will drive economic development and entrench a business culture in one of the world's most unstable regions.

In August last year, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Air Transport in Somaliland reopened Egal International Airport in the capital, Hargeisa.

The refurbishment of Egal was financed by the Kuwait Fund (US \$4,436,300), the Somaliland Government (US \$1,500,500) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (US \$800,000).

In total, the Kuwait Fund has provided US \$10 million on the refurbishment of the two main airports in Somaliland – Egal International and Berbera.

Berbera Airport, which has one of the longest runways on the continent and handles most commercial cargo, is due to have a new terminal building.



Egal is five miles from Hargeisa and both airports are hubs for passengers travelling in the Horn of Africa. Jubba Airways, DAALLO Airlines, African Express Airways, and Ultimate Airlines fly to destinations such as Dubai, Nairobi, and Mogadishu.

Part of the upgrade includes 2.4km of runway being refurbished and the arrival and departure terminals being expanded. Five new wind turbines and a wind data monitoring station have been built, which will help towards previous problems with power supply.

"We approached USAID for funding under a partnership for economic growth intended for the support of the private sector," explained Ahmed Dalal Farah, the director general of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Air Transport in Somaliland.

"We asked them to provide these venture funds so that we could meet the high cost of electricity for running the airport. But the intention is not only that; the surplus electricity generated can be sold on to the nearby

communities so that they can have access to low-cost electricity from the wind turbines."

Farah emphasised the importance of having less costly wind-powered electricity. Somaliland has the highest electricity cost in the region, contributing to the consistent delays in economic development projects and other manufacturing activities.

"Our second phase of expansion will see the runway at Hargeisa extend by another 1.2km and we will also be installing navigation systems, including runway lights, which, of course, need dependable electricity."

In order to secure this consistent supply of power, Farah said the airport has integrated three sources of electricity: "We have a stand-by generator, the private power supply company and the wind turbines. Reliable electricity supply is critical for the growth and efficiency of the airports operations," he added.

Farah is keen to exploit the geographical position of Somaliland, being in a strategic position close to the Arabian Peninsula and an entry point to the Horn of Africa.

"Most countries here are landlocked; we are in a good position to provide hub services."

He said due to the airport and runway improvements, a number of carriers were preparing to initiate services. "We already have a private airline operation called East African Safari Travel, which has begun commercial scheduled flights twice a week," he explained.

In addition, he said Ethiopian Airlines, which previously operated services out of Berbera, has moved its operation to Egal International. "Kenya Airways are also planning to start operations between Nairobi and Hargeisa, so you can see the rise in interest since the improvements that we have made," said Farah.

In terms of future prospects, Farah is confident that the continued airport development works will run parallel with Somaliland's aggressive economic programme, which includes safety and security at its airports.

"We also have a partnership with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in the UK, through their embassy in Nairobi, which helped us tremendously in upgrading our security systems from check-in to X-ray systems up to a point where we can be comparable to other airports in the region."

The smoking remnants of the international terminal at Nairobi's airport.

PICTURE: ASSOCIATED PRESS



Following the fire that engulfed Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi in August last year, operations are firmly back to normal. Thus, the spotlight returns to disaster preparedness and business continuity.

Keith Mwanalushi reports.

Fire safety shouldn't be a burning issue

According to the Kenya Airports Authority (KAA), Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) is fully operational following the August inferno.

KAA states that it now handles a daily average of 19,000 passengers and six cargo flights from Europe, Africa and Asia.

A report from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics shows that, in fact, the fire did little to affect arrival numbers. The report said the total arrivals from JKIA and Moi International Airport in Mombasa dropped just slightly from 178,775 in August to 178,694 in September following the fire.

Kenya Airways passenger numbers between July and September 2013 remained at the same level as the previous year, totalling just over a million, even though the airline said the airport fire initially had an adverse effect on passengers transiting through Nairobi.

Other reports have stated that the national

carrier allegedly lost up to \$4 million (Sh349.2 million) in missed business hours due to the fire.

At approximately 4:30am local time on August 7, 2013 a fire originating in the immigration section of unit 1 (used for international departures) started and rapidly spread to adjoining unit 2, which is used for international arrivals. Fortunately, no one was killed, but two people were hospitalised with non-life-threatening injuries.

After the fire was extinguished, a preliminary investigation was started. Possible terrorism was an initial concern, because the fire occurred on the 15th anniversary of the terrorist bombings of United States embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, plus the fact that Kenya has been involved in an armed conflict with Al-Shabaab in neighbouring Somalia. Investigators, however, soon ruled out terrorism and linked the cause to an electrical fault.

Needless to say, the quick recovery was slightly marred by reports that criticised how the incident was handled. But, irrespective of the successes or failures, there is much to learn from the Nairobi incident.

At a practical level, there are a number of steps an airport should have in place. Manny Kanabe, associate partner and head of Africa development at Athena Aviation, points out a few.

He said clear fire prevention procedure guidance and controls should be implemented and daily checks should be carried out to ensure the fire prevention and procedure are being adhered to, for instance ensuring fire doors, exits, fire equipment and fire notices within the premises are kept unobstructed.

"All airport authorities should have a fire station nearby that can respond quickly to an emergency, airport staff should be adequately trained to react to fire emergencies and regular



inspection and fire prevention audits should be in place," Kanabe advised.

He also stressed the need to set up a team to be responsible for fire safety of the airport. "This would be a blend of airport, local authorities and key airline customers," he added.

Some local observers believe the fire, that burnt the entire international arrivals terminal, exposed failings in the way the blaze was managed and highlighted the poor and slow response to the emergency.

Reports from Kenya indicated that the fire was reported to have started at the second desk of the immigration department and spread quickly, engulfing all the buildings in thick smoke. The Kenya Airport Authority and police had to evacuate all people from the smoke-filled buildings quickly. However, the fire-fighting response was heavily criticised.

After the fire had been extinguished, companies



Sudeep Ghai: "If the reports are true – of the whole of Nairobi having only one functioning fire engine – then it is shocking that the leading airport in East Africa, an international airport with a diverse global passenger base of some six million passengers, somehow neglected to get the basics right."

affected reported that items were missing. Various reports indicated that first responders had looted fire-damaged businesses during and after the fire.

"If the reports are true – of the whole of Nairobi having only one functioning fire engine – then it is shocking that the leading airport in East Africa, an international airport with a diverse global passenger base of some six million passengers, somehow neglected to get the basics right," added Sudeep Ghai, managing partner and founder of Athena Aviation.

To some, the fire could have been contained in time had there been proper coordination and response. As much as the response was prompt, the service providers were still unable to contain the inferno. Initial media reports showed some fire-fighters using buckets to fight the fire.

Local reports further said the fire-fighters fetched water from three main hydrants that started to work

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several minutes after the fire broke out. Allegedly, fire engines were at times unable to push water to the burning upper floors and it took more than six hours to contain a blaze that could have been addressed in time, given the source was established as soon as it broke out.

Motorists also blocked roads, hampering response efforts.

In terms of passenger handling, reports have indicated that the process was completed fairly well but there are lessons that African airports can learn from that incident in terms of disaster preparedness and business continuity.

Kanabe takes the long view on how to deal with disasters. He said, in the final outcome, the key requirement is to put the customer at the heart of what airports deliver and it is, therefore, imperative that there is an integrated approach to dealing with emergency situations.

“We’ve heard about the single fire engine story in Nairobi but there were also reports that first responders were trying to steal safes from banks in the airport while it burned,” Kanabe noted. “Clearly there wasn’t a shared sense of what mattered in this situation. An airport can follow the right procedures, provision for business continuity, set out response plans and rehearse them, but over and beyond that we have to ensure there is a culture in place that places the well-being of the customer above all else.”



Kanabe added that preventative measures and investing in intangibles sometimes might seem difficult to justify. But he stressed: “Building a reputation for safety through clear specific actions, procedures, plans and drills; ensuring your airlines are happy with you; inviting other airport global peers to inspect you; these are some of the practical steps that we think would ensure African safety standards compete on an equal footing with airports in other parts of the world.”

From a distance, it might seem as if there is generally a greater emphasis on airport security compared to fire safety in Africa, so what are some of the key fire safety measures that airport authorities on the continent should be considering in order to avoid a situation such as the JKIA incident?

“With the heightened concerns over global terrorism in recent years, it’s not surprising that security should be a prevailing concern, so I don’t think there is a case for taking the focus off this issue,” Kanabe said.

“However, security is not the same as safety, and airlines tend to be particularly diligent about this because their AOC post-holders are on the hook legally for conduct that falls short of international standards.”

“We have to ensure there is a culture in place that places the well-being of the customer above all else.”

MANNY KANABE



He said that same direct accountability is not as evident in the airport environment, and perhaps it should be.

“If we are to take fire safety management, it goes without saying that airports need procedures and controls clearly communicated and enforced, airport authorities should work with the fire departments to ensure they can respond quickly to any incidents at the airport, and training should be undertaken by airport staff with airlines and external agencies to make sure procedures are being followed.”



“That said, at another level, we would probably suggest that African airports have a safety and security committee at board level and some independent external non-executive directors as part of the make-up of that board, with the freedom and mandate to speak up if they have concerns,” Kanabe advised.

There is also the issue of whether African airports are making enough investment in fire-

Above: JKIA just prior to the fire. PHOTO: ARTHUR BULIVA.
Left: Manny Kanabe: “Airport authorities should work with the fire departments to ensure they can respond quickly to any incidents at the airport, and training should be undertaken by airport staff with airlines and external agencies to make sure procedures are being followed.”

fighting technologies. “I’m not sure we can fault airports for not investing in technology if, by this, we mean the latest advancements in the field. If we are talking about facilities, procedures, training, staffing and the proper integrated relationships with local services and airlines, the answer is no: most African airports have not done this,” Kanabe stressed.

The reason, Kanabe said, is because most African governments control the airport and the airport is a source of tax revenues rather than a customer experience to invest in.



“This loses sight of the fact that an airport is the gateway to your country and for many people it is their first taste of Africa. If you get that right – the culture, the procedures, the service experience, the sense of safety and security – customers spend more and come back. Get it wrong and you join the handbook for hair-raising adventure holidays.”

Ghai looks at the development of Middle East airports as an example, saying that 20 years ago people were landing in deserts, but now the Middle East leads the world in airport development and is the centre of east-west traffic flows.

“They are building capacity that will service 400 million passengers in the next 20 years. The airlines will grow with them, as will as tourism and trade and commerce. A holistic understanding of this journey and getting the basics right – like safe secure standards in fire-fighting – can go a long way to transforming the economic prospects of a nation,” Ghai concluded.

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Nirvan Veerasamy est un entrepreneur « touche-à-tout » dans le transport aérien à l'île Maurice depuis plus de 10 ans. Il a créé plusieurs sociétés et développé en particulier un concept novateur et unique : le YU lounge.

Une enquête de Vincent Chappard.

Vivez l'expérience du YU Lounge

«Welcome to a new departure in lounges» – Page 92

Avant de fonder Veling en 2002, Nirvan Veerasamy, ancien directeur des ventes en Asie d'Airbus et directeur général d'Air Mauritius, a créé une société Aero Services Mauritius. Elle s'était spécialisée dans l'enregistrement des avions à l'île Maurice (off shore aircraft registry) en utilisant les ressources du secteur offshore mauricien et l'aviation civile mauricienne.

«Nous avons monté un business d'enregistrement d'avions similaire que celui des îles Bermudes et aux Caïmans», a déclaré Nirvan Veerasamy.

L'aviation civile d'Oman, d'Irlande, des Caïmans ont su tout de suite que cette activité allait être rémunératrice. Cependant, il est nécessaire que l'aviation civile du pays fonctionne à la même vitesse que le secteur offshore pour réussir, selon Nirvan Veerasamy. Il est capital d'être réactif, compétitif et avoir des ressources or les entrepreneurs ne peuvent pas investir seuls.

« Cette activité a malheureusement été suspendue car nous n'arrivions pas à faire fonctionner le système à la bonne vitesse, l'aviation civile mauricienne prenant trop de temps et n'ayant pas les moyens nécessaires pour prendre plusieurs avions dans le registre et peut être aussi parce que nous aimons fonctionner à Maurice sans prendre de risque », regrette Nirvan Veerasamy. « Les prochaines opportunités seront en Afrique pour ce type d'activités et l'île Maurice y toujours est idéalement bien placée et j'espère que nous allons pas rater l'occasion. »

Nirvan Veerasamy poursuit le développement de Veling, société spécialisée dans la location et la revente d'avions d'occasion.

« Nous avons une flotte de 13 avions dans notre portefeuille dont 7 Boeing 777 chez Emirates, 4 Airbus A340 chez Sri Lankan Airlines et 2 ATR-72 chez Kingfisher que nous avons dû reprendre », souligne Nirvan

Veerasamy. « Veling souhaite investir davantage dans les avions longs courriers et régionaux. »

Veling est également le mandataire exclusif pour la revente des avions de Singapore Airlines depuis 1998. Elle signe les contrats et bénéficie de l'appui de la compagnie singapourienne en termes de MRO, d'engineering, de pièces de rechange ou de moteurs. Elle a déjà scellé de nombreuses ventes pour des compagnies aériennes, des sociétés de leasing, des fonds d'investissements ou des entreprises de démantèlement des avions.

Il y a de nombreux projets en Afrique et beaucoup de compagnies sont prêtes à opérer des Boeing 777 selon Nirvan Veerasamy. « Nous avons de bonnes relations avec le Mozambique, le Kenya, l'Angola, le Botswana et nous proposons bien évidemment nos avions. Nous avons beaucoup d'activités pour 10 à 15 ans à venir avec notre activité pour Singapore Airlines. »



Nirvan Veerasamy développe le concept de YU Lounge à travers General Aviation of Mauritius (GAM). « Nous nous chargeons pour nos clients de l'ensemble des formalités administratives (enregistrement, sécurité, bagages, immigration, ...) dans l'enceinte du YU Lounge en collaboration avec les autorités pendant qu'ils profitent de leur temps libre au salon. » Le YU Lounge est non seulement ouvert aux avions privés mais également à l'ensemble des passagers des vols commerciaux au départ ou à l'arrivée de l'île Maurice. Les utilisateurs ne subissent jamais l'agitation de l'aérogare principale, ses longues files d'attente et ne connaissent jamais le stress.

« L'ADN du produit est axé sur un service optimum au client dans l'enceinte d'un aéroport. Nous sommes complètement focaliser sur le client et son bien-être. C'est un univers

très stressant où il n'y a pas de service où il faut faire la queue pour l'avoir. Nous avons changé de paradigme avec le YU Lounge. Nous vous accueillons comme vous si arrivez au Royal Palm, au One&Only, au Saint Géran, au Prince Maurice ou au Four Seasons, avec tous les ingrédients de l'hospitalité haut de gamme mauricienne ».

Ce sont effectivement les concierges du YU lounge qui viennent vers le client pour les chercher à l'aéroport principal ou les conduire vers son hôtel ou son domicile.

GAM possède un accès direct sur le tarmac, à l'endroit même où les avions privés viennent se poser. On dénombre environ 300 avions privés par an sur Maurice, cette activité ayant augmenté de plus de 50% durant les deux dernières années. GAM travaille en collaboration avec Airports of Mauritius Ltd (AML) et dispose d'un vaste espace dédié d'une part à l'assistance opérationnelle et technique des avions privés et des équipages et surtout à l'accueil des passagers via le YU Lounge qui apprécie le luxe et la discrétion.

Depuis son ouverture en 2008, le nombre de passagers empruntant le YU Lounge est en constante progression. Il a accueilli 3000 passagers pour l'année 2009/2010, 4500 pour 2010/2011, 5500 pour 2011/2012 et enfin 6700 pour 2012/2013. 70% des passagers proviennent en moyenne des vols commerciaux et 30% des vols privés.

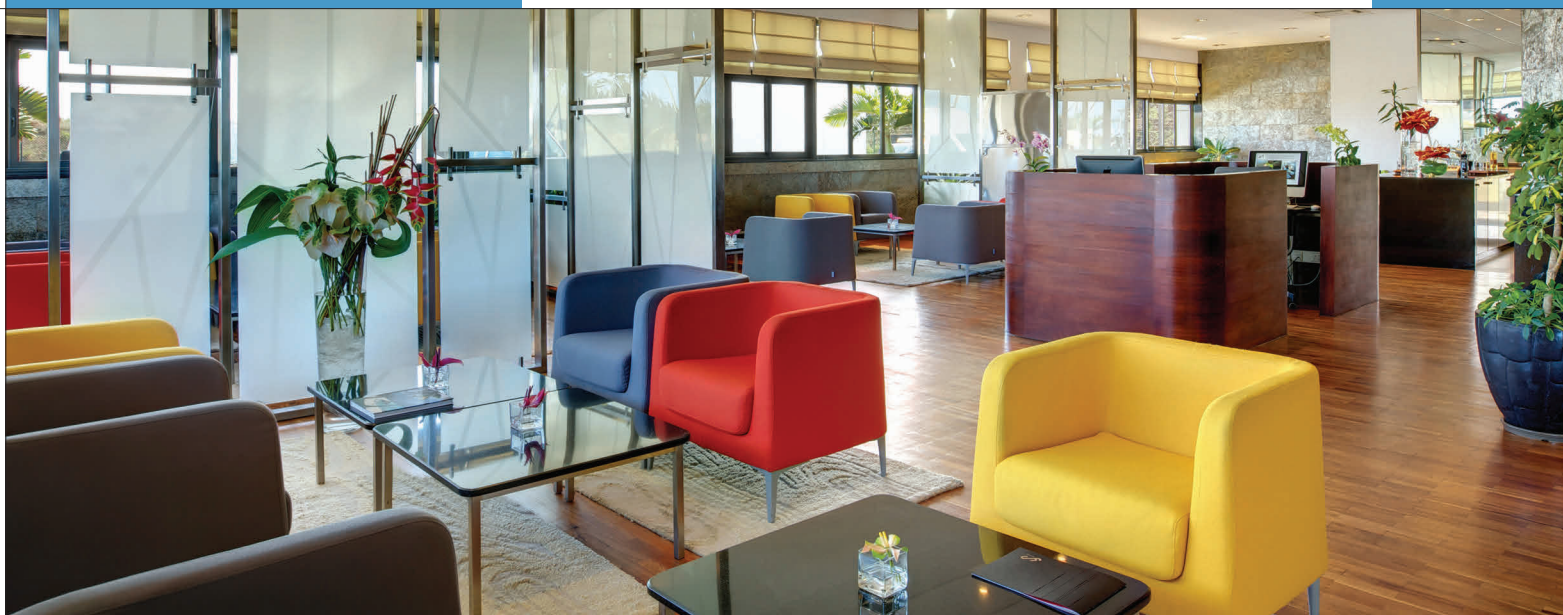
Le YU Lounge bénéficie de partenariats avec de nombreux hôtels où les ventes sont réalisées par les concierges et les centres de réservation. Il y a également des animations, des voyages de presse et des « eductours » organisés pour les opérateurs internationaux. Des offres spéciales sont également proposées aux jeunes mariés, à des groupes et à des sociétés. Le YU Lounge dispose également d'une salle de réunion permettant

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Arrivée au YU Lounge.
Les concierges du YU Lounge.
Le service YU Lounge.





Intérieur du YU Lounge.

SUITE DE LA PAGE 90

aux hommes d'affaires en transit à Maurice d'organiser leurs séminaires et conférences, sans besoin de sortir de l'aéroport, de faire des démarches administratives et de s'engager dans le trafic routier et de revenir à l'aéroport.

Veling recherche activement des opportunités pour développer sa marque et implanter le YU Lounge en Asie, en Inde, en Europe et en Afrique. Des discussions sont en cours avec le Nigéria.

« Nous avons plusieurs modes d'opérations pour le YU lounge, nous pouvons gérer à 100% votre projet avec un YU Lounge, avoir un partenariat dans le cadre d'un terminal d'avions privés ou un contrat de gestion autour de la marque », souligne Dinesh Burrenchobay. « Nous nous sommes concentrés sur l'ouverture de notre second YU Lounge à Saint Kitts dans les Caraïbes et maintenant nous allons développer notre stratégie globale. »



A l'heure où African Aerospace va sous presse, l'inauguration et l'entrée en service du YU Lounge à Saint Kitts se sont déroulés mi décembre 2013. Ce projet a représenté un investissement de 7 millions de dollars et Veling y est actionnaire à 100%. Ce YU Lounge va principalement attirer le trafic d'avions privés français, russes ou américains qui atterrissent aujourd'hui à Saint Martin et se rendent pour la plupart à Saint Bart.

Le YU Lounge est selon ses créateurs, un produit unique alliant aviation et hôtellerie, « un concept que l'on ne rencontre pas souvent dans notre industrie aéronautique. » Son avenir semble promis à un grand avenir, le seul souci pour Nirvan Veerasamy et Dinesh Burrenchobay, c'est de n'avoir que 24 heures par jour pour développer leurs projets.

SOMMAIRE

Welcome to a new departure in lounges

Vincent Chappard meets a man making quite an impact in the world of aircraft leasing and, now, passenger lounges.

Experienced entrepreneur Nirvan Veerasamy has a passion for the air transport industry and has operated in Mauritius for more than 10 years.

His latest company, Veling, is making an impact not only in leasing but also with the travelling public, offering a particularly innovative concept called YU Lounge.

Before founding Veling in 2002, Veerasamy was the director of sales in Asia Airbus and then CEO of Air Mauritius.

Veling's business is growing. It specialises in the leasing and resale of used aircraft. "We have a fleet of 13 aircraft in our portfolio, including seven Emirates Boeing 777s, four Airbus A340s with Sri Lankan Airlines, and two ATR-72s for Kingfisher," Veerasamy said. "Veling wants to invest more in the long-haul and regional aircraft."

Veling is also the exclusive agent for the resale of Singapore Airlines aircraft.

"There are many projects in Africa and many companies are willing to operate," Veerasamy said.

"We have good relations with Mozambique, Kenya, Angola, and Botswana and we also have plenty of activities planned over the next 10-15 years with our business for Singapore Airlines."

Veling is also enjoying success with its lounge concept.

YU Lounges are effectively a typical FBO used for VIP or royal transit but available to commercial airline customers. The company's first example – in Mauritius – is proving popular. Users never experience the bustle of the main terminal or long queues and are free from the stress of airport transit. "The product is focused on optimum customer service in the airport precinct. We're totally focused on the

customer and his well-being. This is a very stressful world," Veerasamy said.

"We changed the paradigm with YU Lounge. We welcome you as if you were arriving at the Royal Palm, the One & Only Le Saint Geran or the Four Seasons, with all the ingredients of the top Mauritian hospitality."

With direct access to the tarmac by the general aviation parking area, the YU lounge has also seen growth from business aviation. There are about 300 private aircraft per year on Mauritius – activity has increased more than 50% during the past two years. The General Aviation of Mauritius (GAM) has worked with Veling in developing the YU concept and utilises the lounge for its private aviation customers.



Around 70% of passengers are now from commercial flights, following YU Lounge creating partnerships with many hotels in Mauritius. YU Lounge also has a meeting room for businessmen in transit where there is no need to exit the airport.

Veerasamy said Veling is actively seeking opportunities to develop and implement the YU Lounge brand in Asia, Europe and Africa. Discussions are under way with Nigeria.

Last month, Veling launched its second YU lounge in St Kitts in the Caribbean.

This project represented an investment of \$7 million and Veling is the 100% shareholder. "This lounge will mainly attract French, Russian or American private jets, which are currently landing at Saint Martin and go mostly to Saint Bart," Veerasamy said.

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The biennial Dubai Airshow has established itself as the major aerospace event for the Middle East, Africa and west Asian markets. Alan Peaford and Marcelle Nethersole report from the latest event, where even unusual weather failed to dampen the enthusiasm...

FLOODED WITH ORDERS

There have always been two things that are simply a 'given' for the Dubai Airshow; the first is always a breathtaking raft of orders from the local carriers – and the other is the weather.

Unlike the other major global shows like Paris and Farnborough, which see conditions switch from arctic winds to freak heatwaves in a single day, Dubai has always been blessed with blue skies and fair winds.

But for the November 2013 event sandstorms and then monsoon-like rain conditions hit the newly constructed exhibition centre, part of the Dubai World Central complex. These adverse conditions led to cancellation of flying displays early on and then cancellation of the entire show on the final day, as floods tore into the main exhibition halls.

But even this weather disaster couldn't put a dampener on the event as the local carriers, true to form, stumped up new orders that blew away

former record deals for the eager aircraft manufacturers.

The show opened with an immediate bang when the Gulf carriers masterminded the largest aircraft launch in history as Emirates CEO Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed al Maktoum and his Qatar Airways and Etihad counterparts, Akbar Al Baker and James Hogan, signed for 175 firm orders and 100 commitments worth well over \$100 billion to formally launch the Boeing 777X programme.



A further Etihad order for 30 Boeing 787-10s made it the world's largest Dreamliner operator, plus orders for 111 Boeing 737s for Flydubai and 50 more A380s for Emirates completed an extraordinary first day.

The 777X announcement brought to an end years of negotiation and months of speculation

over the latest addition to the Boeing stable.

In September, Lufthansa was the first to commit to the 777X with an order for 34 of the new variant, whose changes over the existing model include new wings and General Electric GE9X engines.

But it was the remarkable number of orders at the Dubai show that led the American manufacturer to confirm the launch of the programme. Emirates signed for 150 plus 50 purchase rights; Qatar Airways chipped in with a letter of intent for 50 of the 777-9X model; and Etihad bought 25, – 17 of the -9X and eight of the ultra-long-range 8X version.

The commitment "from four of the world's most highly respected airlines" said Boeing Commercial Aircraft president and CEO Ray Conner, "speaks volumes".

The 777-9X would compete in the 400-seat market segment and offer the lowest operating



The Gulf carriers masterminded the largest aircraft launch in history.

Etihad and Boeing executives celebrate their major signing ... which promises the potential for more aircraft for Air Seychelles.

cost per seat, he said, while the -8X would have around 350 passengers and tackle missions of anything up to 18 hours.

Some of Emirates' tranche will be used to replace early-model 777s (the Dubai-based carrier is the only operator to have bought all five existing versions of the current aircraft), while the remainder will be used to cope with its seemingly never-ending growth.



Emirates' CEO Tim Clark said he anticipated the first -9X arriving in 2020, with the initial -8X following around 18 months later.

Both Emirates' chairman, Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, and Qatar Airways' CEO, Akbar Al Baker, spoke glowingly of the 777X as the aircraft that would define the next stage in their respective businesses.

Al Baker went so far as to describe it as "a revolutionary aircraft that will transform the aviation industry".

Etihad Airways announced orders and commitments for 199 aircraft and 294 engines worth \$67 billion, becoming in the process the world's biggest operator of the Boeing 787 Dreamliner.

The Abu Dhabi airline's largest-ever order spree saw it place firm orders for 87 Airbus and 56 Boeing aircraft, with 56 further options and commitments. The order for 30 787-10s will add to the existing 41 787s on order.

Aside from the B777 orders, Etihad's deals also incorporated 50 Airbus A350 XWBs, 36

Airbus A320neo family aircraft and one Airbus A330-200F.

"These aircraft orders provide the next step in our long-term growth strategy," said Hogan. "They are about meeting the needs of the next 10 years, and beyond, as we grow further and faster than ever before."

"We are helping to establish Abu Dhabi as one of the world's great aviation hubs, offering connections to cities on every continent. This order will provide us with the capacity to continue with those ambitious aspirations."

The orders will replace older, less efficient aircraft, as well as underwriting future growth.

In a significant new approach, Etihad will have a capability to redirect orders to members of its equity alliance – including Air Seychelles. This will allow capacity to be allocated where most required, while improving fleet commonality and sharing significant cost synergies.



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Ethiopian adds four Q400s to fleet >

Bombardier was at the Dubai Airshow announcing Ethiopian Airlines' decision to add another four Q400 NextGen aircraft to its fleet, making a total of 13.

The aircraft will be leased from Middle East-based Palma Holding, which has agreed to buy up to eight – four firm, with four options – at a list price of US\$282 million.

Mesfin Tasew, COO of Ethiopian Airlines, said: "Ethiopia is a mountainous country. We needed an aeroplane that can fly high over the mountains. Initially we had some airports that were gravel, although most were asphalt, runways. So we needed an aeroplane that could handle both. The Q400 is the ideal choice as it fits our operating environment."

"Originally we intended to fly them regionally, but we found their economics very attractive and extended their use to neighbouring countries, flying to Nairobi, Mombasa, Entebbe, Dar es Salaam and so on. We are extremely satisfied with the reliability of the aeroplane."

It was also announced that Ethiopian has become an authorised service facility for the manufacturer. The airline can now perform line and heavy maintenance on Q400 and Q400 NextGen aircraft from its facility at Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa.

This follows Bombardier recently establishing a full-service support office and parts depot in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Ethiopian Airline's Mesfin Tasew with Bombardier's Eric Martel and the new Q400.



Inking the deal (from left): Michael Arumemi-Ikhide (Arik Air Group CEO and president), Sir Johnson Arumemi-Ikhide (Arik Air chairman), Walter Heerdt (LT senior vice president marketing and sales), and Alfried Nessel (CCO LT Maintenance International).

Arik Air extends Lufthansa Technik contract

Nigeria's Arik Air has extended its contract with Lufthansa Technik for another six years, and expanded it to become part of a total operational management deal.

The old agreement had been in place since 2006, when Arik started operations. This extension will cover component support and maintenance for the current fleet of nine 737-700s, four 737-800s and four CRJ900s, as well as the eight more -800s on order. It will also include all future C-checks.

Arik Air's chief executive officer, Michael Arumemi-Ikhide, said: "We started Arik Air with the direct intention to increase capacity in Nigeria and the establish a new level of safety, reliability and

standards for Nigerian and West African aviation community. To date, we've achieved those goals, IATA membership included, by marrying modern fleets with first class maintenance service delivered through Lufthansa Technik.

"Going forward, with the help of Lufthansa Technik, we will be able to reach new standards by forming an MRO facility and training best-in-class engineers. West Africa is a burgeoning market. The next five years will see us expand our short and medium-haul operations so we are also talking with Bombardier to get some regional jet aircraft and then we look at our long-haul expansion.

"This is a critical part of our strategy and we are absolutely thrilled."

Nigerian trainee 'first' for Jetstream Academy

Jetstream Aviation Academy's first group of trainees from Nigeria started their pilot training at the academy's premises in Athens at the end of 2013.

The trainees are part of the new pilot programme undertaken by Jetstream to build a strong cadre of highly trained and qualified pilots for Nigeria.

"Aviation in Africa is expanding rapidly, as it is in the rest of the world," said Captain John Diskos, Jetstream chief executive and head of training. "We are delighted that the Nigerian authorities entrusted the training of their pilots to Jetstream. We are confident they will receive the best classroom, simulator and flying training available from our experienced faculty and will graduate with the coveted EASA licences."

HE Ayodeli Ayodele, Nigerian ambassador in Greece, said: "Nigeria is committed to revitalising its aviation sector. We recognise the need for continuous high-quality training to equip our young people to meet the demands of the sector. Jetstream Aviation Academy is one of the facilities chosen because of the extremely high standards of its programme, facilities and faculty."

The airline pilot trainees are enrolled in Jetstream's cost-effective airline first officer course, which is designed for individuals aiming to move directly into an aircraft cockpit. The programme emphasises superior aeronautical decision-making in a proficiency-based training environment.

The helicopter pilot trainees' course emphasises flying skills and critical thinking in a variety of missions.

Jetstream Aviation Academy, an EASA and UAE GCAA approved training organisation (ATO), operates training centres in Athens, Greece, and in Dubai, UAE.



Al Tariq bomb kit glides into Dubai

A new precision-guided munition, jointly produced by South Africa's Denel Dynamics and Abu Dhabi-based Tawazun Holdings made its debut at the Dubai Airshow.

This follows successful trials and a launch at the LAAD 2013 defence exhibition in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The Al Tariq is a modular IN/GPS-guided glide bomb kit, designed to fit Mk 80 family 500- to 2,000lb bomb bodies, with pop-out wings and moving control surfaces. The standard Al Tariq has a range of up to 40km (depending on release height) but the company offers bolt-on propulsion options that can boost its range to 200km. Increased accuracy is possible by the addition of semi-active laser or imaging infrared seekers. This makes the weapon a direct competitor to Sagem's AASM and Boeing's JDAM-ER.

During recent trials, the Al Tariq demonstrated impressive accuracy, even in the most demanding scenarios, proving able to engage off-axis targets and then to attack them from a different direction during the terminal phase, allowing the pilot to select the best attack direction and impact angle, but requiring the weapon to manoeuvre dynamically and perform dog-leg course adjustments.

Extensive testing has demonstrated the weapon's ability to dynamically determine its own flight path according to pre-programmed launch and terminal guidance conditions.

Al Tariq scored a number of direct hits, with miss distances of less than half a metre.

Al Tariq will be the first product of the new Tawazun Dynamics company, set up following the creation of a new joint venture between Tawazun Holding (51%) and Denel (49%).

The weapon was tested on the Atlas Cheetah and Dassault Mirage F1 and has been integrated on the South African Air Force's BAE Hawk Mk120 lead-in fighter trainer aircraft.

Tawazun is likely to pursue an initial integration on the Mirage 2000. The UAE AF&AD example in the static park is surrounded by four models of the new glide bomb.

Air Cote d'Ivoire inks \$69m turboprop deal

Air Cote d'Ivoire signed a conditional purchase agreement for two Bombardier Q400 NextGen regional turboprops, and took options on a further two.

At list prices, the initial contract is worth \$69 million, or \$141 million if the two options are exercised.

Riven by internal strife over the past decade, the West African nation has embarked on a programme of national reconstruction. Air Cote d'Ivoire has been charged with rebuilding both domestic and regional routes, from Dakar in the west to Kinshasa in the south.

The airline, which began operations in January, has a fleet of three Airbus A319s, plus an Embraer E170; the Brazilian aircraft will be replaced by the Bombardier turboprops (chalet A1) on services to eight domestic destinations and others around the region.

The two Q400 NextGens will be delivered in August

and September 2014. A decision on whether to take up the options will be made by November next year, said Air Cote d'Ivoire CEO René Decurey.

"We were looking for an aircraft able to accommodate our passengers in a certain way on a domestic network that has been closed for 15 years," said Decurey.

It needed to have a standard suitable for international routes within a two-hour radius of Abidjan, the national capital, but also have the ability to operate from unpaved runways.

Pictured below: Air Cote d'Ivoire chairman, General Abdoulaye Coulibaly (centre), and CEO René Decurey (second left) sign the contract for two Bombardier Q400 NextGen aircraft with Mike Arcamone, president, Bombardier Commercial Aircraft (second right), and Bombardier sales personnel.



Tecnam MMA delivered to Eagle Aviation >

Eagle Aviation has taken delivery of its Tecnam MMA multi-mission aircraft, equipped with a complete surveillance system from Airborne Technologies to use pipeline surveillance, initially in South Sudan, and subsequently in Nigeria.

Eagle signed the contract to buy the aircraft at last year's Paris Airshow and took delivery at the Dubai Airshow.

Eagle general manager, Manuel Garbaccio, said the company would sign for four more aircraft in similar configuration, which it will use principally in support of the company's oil industry customers.

These will work alongside Bombardier CRJs, a fifth of which was delivered in November.

Based on the Tecnam P2006T, a four-seat light twin, powered by a pair of 100hp Rotax 912S engines, the Tecnam MMA offers multi-fuel capability, a low visual and noise signature and very low operating costs.

With the miniaturisation of sensors and with new multi-spectral sensing technologies, surveillance

Eagle Aviation's Manuel Garbaccio received the new aircraft from Airborne Technologies CEO Wolfgang Grumeth.



aircraft can now be smaller, lighter, and cheaper, and the MMA is at the forefront of this trend.

For Airborne Technologies, which focuses on fully customised special mission platforms with leading-edge features, the Tecnam offers an ideal complement to the company's helicopter and Vulcanair P68 special missions conversions.



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As Chicago steps up to take over the baton as host city for the 20th World Route Development Forum this September, Marcelle Nethersole spotlights the success of African nations at the 19th event late last year in Las Vegas.



Viva Africa!

Morocco, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and South Africa were just some of the African nations trying to attract business at the 19th World Route Development Forum in Las Vegas, USA. It was the largest Routes event to date and attracted almost 3,000 high-profile delegates from more than 100 countries.

Co-hosted by the Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority and Las Vegas McCarran International Airport, the event was held in the Las Vegas Convention Center

and marked the first time any Routes event has been held in the USA.

Chicago will host this year's event in September but then, in 2015, Routes will take place in the South African city of Durban.

As well as South Africa, other African countries were also lining up to show off their wares.

Still plenty of capacity on the road to Morocco

Morocco's Office of National Des Aéroports (ONDA), the organisation that manages its 25 airports, said it expects to see traffic double at all of its airports by 2020.

Already, in the last three months, its airports have seen a growth of between 15 to 20% and by 2020 it expects to see traffic figures double from 15 million passengers to 30 million.

ONDA director general, Dalil Guendouz, said: "Morocco's airports are a very important growth market. We have 18 international airports and, as a whole, they handled 15 million passengers in 2012."

In the first eight months of 2013 passenger numbers were up 7% to 10.8 million, with August seeing year-on-year growth of 20%. Traffic has increased most in Rabat (+23.8%), Fez (+12.%) and Marrakech (+11.5%).

While Marrakech is its big tourist city, it is Casablanca that is the economic capital of the country.

"Casablanca Airport represents 50% of the global traffic in Morocco," said Guendouz. "It is an international hub; it's a bridge between north and south and also between east and west."

The country's national carrier, Royal Air Maroc, is also based in Casablanca. It recently expanded its operation from the hub by adding new routes to Gatwick, Copenhagen and Stockholm.

"Having our national carrier in Casablanca enables



it to connect with 24 countries in Africa. So it's a very important strategic position," said Guendouz.

"The strategy of the government is not to just build airports but to increase industry in general. "We have an industrial zone in Casablanca dedicated to the aviation industry, which includes the best and biggest manufacturers in the world like EADS, Bombardier and Safran. We have also several training schools for engineers and technicians."

ONDA is currently overseeing large airport expansion programmes. Casablanca is currently under construction and, once complete, ONDA expects its passenger figures to multiply three-fold.

Morocco's tourist board was keen to extol the country's many opportunities for business.

Guendouz said: "Today it has 7 million and by the end of 2014 it will have a capacity of 21 million passengers. Marrakech has 3.5 million passengers and, by the end of September 2014, it could cope with nine million passengers."

"We have about 24 million as global capacity overall – by the end of 2014 we expect to

see 46 million."

Marrakech and Fez are the next biggest airports in the country. Both became designated Ryanair bases in early 2013.

"Other low-cost carriers are also starting to add Morocco to their lists. For example, EasyJet has flights to Marrakech from London Stansted. It also helps that we have an 'open skies' agreement with the EU," said Guendouz.

Business aviation is also on the up. The main airports catering for business jets are Casablanca, Rabat, Marrakech and Tangier, which each have their own specific zones.



Left: Michael Mabuyakhulu calling for 2015 support. Above: James Benedict Diu sees Dar as a major hub.

2015 host province has something for everyone

Routes 2015 will take place in the South African city of Durban, in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, and its economic development and tourism authority was at the Vegas show.

“KwaZulu-Natal is one of the nine provinces of South Africa. We are the biggest event destination in South Africa, with the 2010 FIFA World Cup being just one of an array of huge events we have successfully hosted,” said Michael Mabuyakhulu, the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for economic development and tourism.

“Delegates can look forward to flying into our state-of-the-art King Shaka International Airport, which opened in May 2010, just before the FIFA World Cup.”

The Economic Development and Tourism Authority will be organising pre and post tourist trips for delegates to the show.

“We will roll out the red carpet and greet delegates like kings and queens,” said Mabuyakhulu.

KwaZulu-Natal is known for offering visitors

activities to suit the chilled out or the adrenaline junkie.

“We have fabulous outdoor activities. We have beautiful beaches, nature-based tourism facilities, sporting events and adventure activities, including abseiling the world’s highest gorge, diving among ragged-tooth sharks and white-water rafting. Visitors can one minute be scuba diving and the next be in a game park,” said Mabuyakhulu.

“We are also home to two World Heritage Sites – iSimangaliso Wetland Park and uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park.

“Another popular park is Hluhluwe-iMfolozi, which is famous for its white rhino population. The province is also home to the mighty Zulus.”

The Economic Development and Tourism Authority is working closely with South African Airlines and King Shaka International Airport to promote the province.

“We are all at Routes as a team. We’re working together to make sure we can shout to the world that we’re ready and looking forward to Routes 2015,” said Mabuyakhulu.

Tanzania’s facilities on the way up

The Tanzania Aviation Authority was at Routes to talk about developments, including new airports and the rehabilitation of other facilities.

Julius Nyerere International Airport, in the capital Dar es Salaam, is currently undergoing a large construction project.

“Terminal 3 is currently under construction for 36 months. It will replace T2 as the international terminal, while T2 will concentrate on domestic traffic,” said James Benedict Diu, director economic regulation.

“The traffic going into Julius, up to December last year, was two million people, including tourists and domestic passengers. Once T3 is operating, we expect these figures to rise.”



There are improvements going on at Kilimanjaro International, Mwanza Airport, and Abeid Amani Karume International Airport, which is located in Zanzibar.

“We are also here promoting our new Songwe International Airport in Mbeya,” said Diu. “This will be a hub for southern African countries and also for agricultural and horticultural products going to Europe and other parts of the world.”

Diu said the civil aviation authority is concentrating on route development to Europe, south east Asia, China and Singapore.

He said: “Only last month we signed with Singapore. We’re also looking at the Far East market. We’re looking at disposable income and many people in the Far East have the capital to spend.

“Tourists like to come to Tanzania to go on the safaris – it is home to the Serengeti ecosystem in the north of the country. We have a lot of visitors to Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa’s highest peak, and to Zanzibar, which is known as Spice Island.”

The country is also seeing a growth in business aviation, with a rate currently at 16%.



Africa sets out its

*African countries and airlines will benefit from a rise in tourism and **Marcella Nethersole** joined more than 50,000 attendees at the World Travel Market (WTM) in London, and looked at what the African tourism industry representatives had to offer.*

■ The Vanilla Islands

The Vanilla Islands concept originally came to life in 2010 with the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) formally recognising the Vanilla Islands Tourism Organisation as an entity late last year.

The brand currently unifies the Indian Ocean islands of the Maldives, Mayotte, Mauritius, Comoros, Seychelles, Madagascar and Reunion.

Sri Lanka has been invited to join the grouping and developers also have their eyes on inviting islands off the coast of Africa and India.

Seychelles minister of tourism and culture, Alain St Ange, was at WTM and said he hoped people would recognise the Vanilla Islands as a destination in the same way as they did with the islands of the Caribbean.

“We had an €800,000 budget from the EU to help us in 2013, and possibly more in 2014,” said St Ange.

The Seychelles is one of the most visited of the islands, with tourism up 13% year-on-year, and by the end of 2013 it hoped to have received 240,000 arrivals.

St Ange added that he hoped to see more airlines visit the island, with British Airways making a return.

Air Seychelles is looking forward to receiving

three Viking Air DHC-6 Twin Otter Series 400 in 2014 to help with its domestic island services.

■ Ghana

Ghana Tourism Authority said that while it knows it can't compete with other African countries that offer safaris, it has its own unique attractions.

“Ghana tourism has been developing over the years in our heritage, tourism and eco-tourism – these are our strong points,” said manager Adeline Boateng.

“Ghana stands out as a preferred tourist destination in west Africa, with its rich history, time-honoured traditions and its natural scenic beauty.

“We have centuries-old monuments along the shores, which today are World Heritage sites due to the links of trading between west Africa and Europe, as well as the trans-Atlantic slave trade. This is a very important part of our history – one that visitors can learn about at our various museums.

“Ghana has many different regions in the country that all hold its charm, from the rainforest and waterfalls to stunning national parks and beaches.

“And, while Ghana isn't known for its safaris,

it is home to various animal sanctuaries, including monkey, hippo, and crocodile.

“We have friendly crocodile sanctuaries where visitors can actually take photos with the crocs and they won't harm you,” assured Boateng.

Ghana has steadily seen its tourist figures rise with increasing numbers coming from the USA, UK, Germany, and southern African countries and the sub-region.

Most visitors fly into Accra's Kotoka International Airport, the base of Air Ghana, but outside of the capital Ghana has other international and domestic airports in the main cities such as Kumasi and Sunyani.

There are 63 airlines operating in Ghana, two of which – Antrak Air and CiTylinK (CTK) – offer domestic flights.

■ Emirates Airline

Emirates Airline has been making major inroads into Africa and vice president for the UK, Laurie Berryman, said he was excited about the airline's expansion in Africa. With six airports served in the UK (London Heathrow, Gatwick, Birmingham, Manchester, Newcastle and Glasgow) the Dubai airline is witnessing growing traffic to Africa.

“Africa is actually a region Emirates is really looking at for expansion.” Berryman said. The airline added Conakry in Guinea last September.

“Africa has a lot of natural resources, which is a big market for the Far East and Australia. Everyone says that Africa is going to be the new Asia, as it has huge potential, and we are seeing good growth. We have just taken Luanda from three services a week to daily.



Putting Africa on the map: The Vanilla Islands, Ghana, Emirates Airline, Botswana, and Sierra Leone.

stall for tourists

“We also connect to Lusaka in Zambia and Harare in Zimbabwe, where business is strong – we were one of the first airlines back in to the country and have been operating back there for two years.

“Then we have the traditional markets, such as Nairobi, Entebbe, and Dar es Salaam, which all have strong links to the Middle East and to the east as well.”

Emirates had a model of its first class suite used on A380s and B777s on show at the WTM stand. “Our suite really allows the first class passenger to totally cut themselves off from everyone and relax in luxury,” said Berryman.

■ Botswana

Air Botswana was working together at WTM with the Botswana Tourism Authority to promote the country.

“Botswana is possibly the best destination for safaris in Africa, which makes our beautiful country and an instant hit with tourists,” said Charmain Lemkus, sales manager of the airline.

“Whatever animal you want to see, you’re likely to find it in Botswana. We also have stunning scenery.”

The Okavango Delta is a unique eco-system of waterways, forest glades and lush savannah grasslands, something you wouldn’t imagine in a country that is 80% arid and home to the vast Kalahari Desert.

“Then, of course, we have the beautiful Chobe River, home of one of the densest concentrations of wildlife in the country. These are just a couple of the highlights our country offers,” said Lemkus.

Botswana is popular for both leisure and business markets.

“Gaborone is the capital and the business hub, but we also have Francistown, our second biggest city, which is the heart of diamond mining and was the centre of southern Africa’s first gold rush,” said Lemkus.

Air Botswana has been in operation since 1988 and links towns and game lodges within the country, and southern Africa, with frequent scheduled flights.

While the airline has yet to venture out of Africa, within the continent it operates flights to Botswana from Johannesburg, Cape Town, Lusaka and Harare, and has a codeshare flight with Kenya Airways from Nairobi.

Within Botswana, the Air Botswana route network includes flights to Gaborone, from Maun, Kasane and Francistown.

“At the moment we just serve Africa but as a long-term strategy we hope to fly outside the continent – but that won’t be until at least 2017,” said Lemkus.

Air Botswana operates three ATR 42-500s and the larger ATR 72-500 turboprop, RJ85s and a BAE 146.

■ Sierra Leone

After emerging from a decade of civil war in 2002, Sierra Leone is now a country ready to shout about what it has to offer.

While the National Tourist Board of Sierra Leone has been attending WTM for several years, it is only in the last couple that it has seen visitor figures slowly creeping up.

“Sierra Leone is really a new destination, very

unspoilt and environmentally it is still intact,” said Fatmata Abe-Osagie. “We still don’t have many visitors, but we can see a steady increase. To be honest, we’re not looking for mass tourism.”

Sierra Leone is touting itself as an eco-tourist destination.

“We’re different to most other African countries as we’re still untouched; it is quite literally a virgin destination,” said Abe-Osagie. “Visitors can dive, bird watch, fish, do adventure activities – it’s an outdoor lifestyle and we are now focusing on eco-tourism.

“We have eco-lodges already and these are becoming more and more. We want to promote sustainable and responsible tourism and we want to keep our country clean. We’re looking for people to come in and give back to the community.”

Abe-Osagie added that there is a lot of interest from international investors, who see the benefit and opportunities.

Visitors to Sierra Leone fly in to Lungi International Airport, which can cause a bit of a headache as the airport and the country’s capital, Freetown, are separated by the Sierra Leone River.

“From the airport, visitors need to travel via water taxis, ferry, speedboat or hovercraft. Many flights come in late, which can require people to stay in Lungi for the night,” said Abe-Osagie.

She added: “We are seeing an increase in airlines coming in, which also makes it more appropriate to get a new airport, and this is currently under negotiation with the government.”

David Stockton

Marcella Nethersole *speaks to the director, global aviation solutions, G4S.*



1

■ What does airport security generally involve?

Airport security tries to ensure a safe and positive customer experience. The various techniques and methods used aim to protect passengers, staff and aircraft from accidental or malicious harm, crime and other threats, which may occur in an airport setting. This involves monitoring airport perimeters, screening hold baggage, questioning passengers about the nature of their baggage, screening passengers and staff before entry is granted into airside areas, controlling access to restricted areas, guarding aircraft, cargo, car parks and fuel farms, as well as behavioural detection across the airport.

2

■ Which African airports do G4S control and do they differ?

We provide services in Botswana, Cameroon, Morocco, Nigeria, Namibia, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban and Zambia. All our airports across the continent are different, both in terms of structure and operation. Accordingly, the function that we serve at these airports also differs, depending on the services required. Our services can range from small areas like cabin baggage screening to large services such as guarding aircraft.

3

■ Is airport security heightened in certain African countries?

Yes. The reasons for this can vary. Security procedures can be heightened for document verification, since statistically the instances involving false passports and visas are higher in the African region. Human trafficking, threat detection, and cargo issues are also more common at African airports and, therefore, the relevant security processes are intensified as appropriate.

4

■ Does G4S employ a percentage of local people?

G4S prides itself on recruiting the majority of its employees from the local area. In some cases all staff will be employed locally. This is certainly the case in Africa. G4S is one of Africa's largest employers with more than 112,000 people. We have regional teams in place, which train staff to international standards. This way we can combine the highest standards of training with vital local knowledge, ensuring all our airports across the world are staffed with best-in-class employees.

5

■ Due to the global economic crises, what security issues do airports face?

Airports felt the pressures of the economic downturn. Reduced passenger numbers, increased running costs and price-cutting initiatives all had an impact. While the safety and security of travellers and airports remained paramount, our clients needed us to develop ways of doing more for less. We work closely with the airports to build their brand equity over a long period and it is our job to protect it.

6

■ How did G4S get involved in aviation security?

G4S already had a large professional workforce in place, which meant that a move into aviation security was a natural progression. We were able to leverage our international brand and consistency of service to quickly gain recognition for this new offering. Performance in one sector helps us establish a foothold in another.

7

■ How does G4S see aviation security changing?

We foresee a stronger blend of manpower and technology. We believe that safety and security should never be compromised and an industry move to a risk-based, outcome-focused process will look more at people rather than objects. To support this, critical joint investment in staff training must be a priority. We believe that the entire process of aviation security should become more holistic, and solutions will become more customer-driven.

8

■ What does a typical day involve for you?

I am based in Dubai but travel is a big part of the job. I look at a range of issues on any given day, for example analysing the change in relevant technologies and discussing new outsourcing opportunities. The key element of my job is innovation and our differentiation in people, process and technology, constantly looking for new ideas to improve our service offering and coming up with new concepts that can help monetise the airport. I need to review our operations, and the way in which I do this, the areas that I look at, and the solutions I generate all vary depending on the region, the airport, and our service contract.



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