



# AFRICAN AEROSPACE

THE MAGAZINE FOR AEROSPACE PROFESSIONALS IN AFRICA

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# Can Africa finally break free and prosper?

**T**raditionally South Africa has represented the engine room of the African economy but this is changing fast, with Nigeria gaining in economic importance and parts of north Africa starting to push ahead after the Arab Spring.

Ethiopia has proved that it can develop an airline on a par with any other and links with Arab countries and China are pulling others up by the bootstraps.

There is little doubt the potential for Africa is huge. In the commercial aviation world this has led to interest in developing low-cost airlines, with several new start-ups, such as FastJet, Jambo Jet and FlySafair, lining up to compete with the likes of Kulula and Comair.

In this issue we've taken a look at these airlines, reflected on how the continent's airport infrastructure needs to develop, and spoken to the Airlines Association of Southern Africa (AASA) about the challenges – and, in particular, the question of whether this time African aviation can break free and prosper rather than ending in yet more broken airlines.

We also speak with South African Airways CEO Monwabisi Kalawe about how the prospects for the airline could be changing at last.

As the attention of the aerospace industry also turns to Africa with African Aerospace & Defence taking place in Centurion again in September, we look at the South African Air Force's long history and its current make-up.

Other African air forces are building impressive capabilities too, as was evident at the recent air show in Marrakesh.

With troubles in north Africa never far away, it is not surprising that the more stable nations seek to prepare to defend themselves. But it would be nice to think that the whole of north Africa could one day be peaceful, stable and allow the economies to live



up to their promise – and start-ups, such as Nile Air, could count on growth to help them succeed.

Many countries have started to develop aerospace industries, training the next generation and creating ties with global industry players. But such players – Boeing and Airbus leading the way – will not be interested if civil wars and terrorism continue to blight Africa's image in the world.

**Ian Sheppard**  
Editor

**COVER: Monwabisi Kalawe, the new boss of South African Airways.**

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# AIRPORTS

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«La sécurité aéroportuaire à la traîne: L'Afrique doit améliorer la sécurité de ses aéroports selon Ali Tounsi, secrétaire général d'ACI Africa.»





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## Selex Falco imagery saves lives in DRC

The United Nations is seeking bids from companies to provide UAVs for its peacekeeping mission in Mali after shelving plans to deploy surveillance UAVs in Cote d'Ivoire following improved security in the west African country.

The use of unmanned systems was given a boost when a Falco remotely piloted aerial system (RPAS),

operated by Selex ES, a Finmeccanica company, picked up images of people in danger after a boat capsized on Lake Kivu, near Goma, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Thanks to the alert, UN peacekeepers were able to intervene and 14 people were rescued.



## Africa growth world's slowest, says IATA

While year-on-year global passenger demand was up 5.4% in February 2014, Africa was the slowest growing region with an increase of 0.1%, according to IATA. Over the same period, African airlines added 4.1% capacity into the market, resulting in a reduction in the average passenger load factor (the percentage of fare-paying seats per plane which were sold) to 63.7%. The global average was 78.1%.

The weakness over recent months could, in part, reflect adverse economic developments in some parts of the continent, with the slowdown in the major economy of South Africa, as well as growing competition from airlines based outside the region.

## AfBAA in MoU with CAASA

The African Business Aviation Association (AfBAA) has announced an MoU with the Commercial Aviation Association of

South Africa (CAASA).

The agreement is to ensure that both parties provide continued support to each others' on-going promotion of business aviation as an efficient and safe mode of transport across Africa.

"Each of our associations understands the value that business aviation brings to developing economies on the continent. This sits at the heart of AfBAA's activity and CAASA sees it as an integral part of the economic growth of South Africa," said Rady Fahmy, executive director of AfBAA.

## SA and Swaziland in air traffic deal

The Air Traffic and Navigation Services (ATNS) company of South Africa and the Swaziland Civil Aviation Authority (SWACAA) have signed an agreement aimed at building essential aviation infrastructure that will unlock and stimulate regional economic activity – by contributing to a safe, efficient and reliable

transport infrastructure within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region.

Revenue generated from the collection of fees for over-flights will accrue to Swaziland.

SWACAA director general, Solomon Dube said: "ATNS has a reputation of deploying the best efficient and effective aeronautical billing and collection system in the region, if not the continent."

## Cubic wins Morocco F-16 training

Cubic Defense Systems has been awarded a contract valued at more than \$5 million from the US Air Force to supply its P5 combat training system (P5CTS) to the Moroccan Air Force.

Morocco will join the United States Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps, along with a number of other air forces, in using the P5CTS to support high-fidelity live and post-mission training.

The P5CTS will be used by Moroccan pilots flying the recently delivered F-16 aircraft.



## CAE signs six-year deal with Caverton Helicopters

Caverton Helicopters has awarded a six-year contract to CAE to provide training centre operation services at a new centre in Lagos, Nigeria. It will be ready for operation by mid-2015.

CAE will be providing turnkey solutions that include the start-up, maintenance and operation of the training centre. With its six simulator bays, it will be one of the first complete commercial aviation training centres in sub-Saharan Africa.

The centre will be equipped with a CAE 3000 Series AW 139 full-flight simulator (FFS), a CAE 7000XR Series Boeing 737 NG FFS and two CAE Simfinity integrated procedures trainers (IPTs).

"Our pilots have been training with CAE and in helicopter training centres in the UAE, Qatar, the USA, Brazil, Italy and Norway over the past few years due to the lack of availability of the required facilities in the region and we are very excited to be building the first ever commercial aviation training centre in Lagos with CAE as our partner," said Adeniyi Makanjuola, chairman of Caverton Helicopters, who signed the deal with Nick Leontidis, CAE's group president, civil simulation products, training and services.



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## Four die in Ghana helicopter crash

A Sikorsky UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter carrying workers to a Russian-owned oilrig off the coast of Ghana crashed killing four people on May 8. A further four people were rescued.

The Ghana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) said the incident occurred after the helicopter, operated by Ghana's Volta River Aviation, took off from the western port of Takoradi on its way to the Jack Ryag oilrig near the giant Jubilee field.

## SAA to introduce wrapping baggage

South African Airways (SAA) has announced that, following a successful trial period, the airline is taking steps leading to the implementation of baggage wrapping for customer bags as a permanent feature.

On January 22 SAA introduced a complimentary baggage wrapping service to customers travelling out of Johannesburg. The trial has



## Airbus Helicopters delivers three EC225s for SonAir

Airbus Helicopters has delivered three EC225s, acquired by Milestone Aviation Group for lease to SonAir – an African operator – which will utilise them for oil and gas heli-lift duties in Angola.

The hand-over ceremony in Marignane, France marked the latest EC225 delivery by Airbus Helicopters. SonAir's operating fleet already includes 12 EC225s, four AS332 L2s and three AS365 N3s.

now been concluded and customer feedback has proven positive.

Tlali Tlali, SAA's spokesperson said: "For quite some time now, claims and complaints relating to baggage pilferage and damage presented a major challenge to us. Several initiatives were

implemented but could hardly bring any significant improvements for the customers and the airline. In an effort to provide the best possible solution, we decided to implement a baggage wrapping service in order to significantly reduce if not eliminate baggage-handling irregularities."

## WFS signs Kenya terminal agreement

Worldwide Flight Services (WFS) has signed a partnership agreement with Transglobal Cargo Centre in Kenya to take over the full management, operation and business development of Transglobal's ultra modern and fast-growing fresh produce and cargo terminal at Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport.

From June 1, Transglobal Cargo Centre operates under the Africa Flight Services (AFS) brand, the WFS division responsible for the development of a full range of handling activities across Africa.

the route between Dar es Salaam and Lusaka, as well as Tanzanian domestic routes from Dar es Salaam, while Proflight will service its existing domestic routes in Zambia, and its route to Lilongwe in Malawi, from Lusaka.

## Astral China link

Astral Aviation has signed an MoU with China's HNA Group, in which the Chinese group's Hainan Airlines subsidiary will become a shareholder in the Kenyan cargo specialist.

■ See also page 90.

## A380 for Abidjan

As of the 2014-2015 winter season, Air France will serve Abidjan in the Ivory Coast using an Airbus A380 with three weekly flights. Abidjan becomes the first destination in west Africa to be served by the A380.

Air France confirmed its ambition to make Abidjan the second destination on the African continent to be served by its superjumbo after Johannesburg and the first in French-speaking Africa.



## Ethiopian is a four-time winner

Ethiopian Airlines has won the 2014 airline reliability performance award from Bombardier Aerospace for the fourth year in a row.

The award was given to Ethiopian for achieving an average dispatch reliability rate of 99.4%, making it first in the overall Bombardier Q400 product category for the Middle East and Africa region.

The award recognises the skill and dedication of Ethiopian employees working

on the turboprop and light aircraft of the airline.

Tewolde Gebremariam, Ethiopian CEO said: "We are committed to providing our esteemed customers with a reliable schedule and punctual flights at all times. Our higher dispatch reliability performance is a reflection of this commitment to our customers on our domestic and regional routes."

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## Air Namibia MoU with Turkish

Air Namibia signed an MoU with Turkish Airlines earlier this year covering a number of areas of cooperation.

Among other things, the MoU seeks to facilitate human capital development and training, coordinated network development, strengthen operating and technical capabilities and improve Air Namibia's service standards and efficiency levels.

## Zambia selects Thales TopSky

Zambia has chosen Thales for the supply, delivery, installation and commissioning of the country's air traffic management and radar surveillance system following an international competitive tender.

Thales will supply its TopSky air traffic control system to Kenneth Kaunda International Airport in Lusaka and Harry Mwanga Nkumbula International Airport in Livingstone.

The Thales system will be delivered alongside two primary radars and two secondary surveillance radars equipped with full mode S transponder interrogation technology. All systems are fully compliant with the new ICAO Flight Plan 2012 format and Eurocontrol standards.



PHOTO: AIR AUSTRAL

## Air Austral launches tasty Vanilla treat

Air Austral has launched the Vanilla Islands' Pass, a new product to facilitate travel within the Indian Ocean and to increase the tourism development of the region.

The pass allows the combination of inter-islands packages with attractive prices on a wide range of destinations.

From Reunion Island visitors can explore Mauritius, the

Seychelles, Madagascar (Antananarivo, Tamatave, Nosy be), Comoros (Moroni) or Mayotte.

"With the pass, the company widens its range of products, opens a door to a new international clientele and encourages the creation of inter-islands combination on its regional network," said Jean-Marc Grazzini, marketing and commercial executive vice president of Air Austral.

## Top award for Ethiopian Academy

The Ethiopian Aviation Academy has been voted 2014 airline training services provider of the year by the African Airlines Association (AFRAA).

It is the biggest aviation academy in Africa with an annual in-take of 1,000 students in key areas of aviation.

Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO, Tewolde Gebremariam, said: "Historically, one third of our academy graduates have been from other African countries. In order to satisfy the growing need

for aviation professionals in Africa, we have invested \$80 million over the last three years to upgrade the in-take capacity of our academy, which has now reached 1,000 trainees per year."

## Evergreen Apple's new core identity

Evergreen Apple Nigeria has a new name, "EAN Aviation" – and has been promoting a revamped brand.

Initially known as Evergreen Apple Nigeria, the brand refresh has been implemented following an expansion in the type of

aviation services offered by the company, and the need to have the name reflect the core business activity.

With the clarification of identity, EAN Aviation will be well positioned to continue to develop an internationally recognised aviation business.

## Afriqiyah adds third A330 to AFI KLM

Afriqiyah Airways has added a third aircraft to its contract with AFI KLM E&M for the Libyan airline's Airbus A330s.

A 'total care' contract already included engine and component support, as well as maintenance checks for all aircraft of the Libyan fleet.

AFI KLM E&M's Fabrice Defrance, senior vice president commercial said: "Afriqiyah Airways is a privileged partner.

"With this contract they confirm a strong sign of trust in AFI KLM E&M.

"It strengthens our position in the north African region, which is growing rapidly and where many projects are under way."

## FastJet stops Ghana and Angola services

FastJet has suspended the Fly540 services in Ghana and Angola. The two group-owned ATR aircraft operating on routes from the two countries are being sold and a further leased ATR in Ghana is being returned.

FastJet CEO Ed Winter, said: "We are currently focused on expanding the low cost network in east and southern Africa by establishing bases in Zambia, Kenya and South Africa and these plans are progressing well. However, our overall vision is to create a pan-African low-cost network and, as such, launching the low-cost FastJet model in both Angola and Ghana remains firmly part of the company's long-term plans."

## Envoy leads Thales in Africa

Former French Ambassador to Greece, Christophe Farnaud, has been named as Thales' next vice president, Africa. Farnaud was previously in charge of international relations.



## Moreton joins Universal for Africa

Universal Weather and Aviation has named Judith Moreton as its new regional vice president, Europe, Middle East, and Africa.

Moreton is a familiar face in the region, having had nearly 30 years of business aviation and entrepreneurial experience, including for Shell Aircraft and, most recently, serving as vice president and general manager for Jet Aviation UK.

This followed a series of executive roles and the founding of several successful aviation start-ups, including Little Blue Private Jets and Bombardier Skyjet International.

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## LAM signs for three 737NGs

Mozambique Airlines (LAM) signed an agreement in May with Boeing for the acquisition of three New Generation Boeing 737s.

The first of the new planes is expected to be delivered in May 2015 with the other two expected in the two subsequent years.

## Ethiopian receives seventh Dreamliner

Ethiopian Airlines announced that it took delivery of its seventh Boeing 787 Dreamliner on May 20.

Ethiopian was the first in the world outside Japan to receive a 787, in August 2012. It will take delivery of a further three this year.

## Air Côte d'Ivoire obtains third A319

Air Côte d'Ivoire has added a third A319 to its contract with AFI KLM E&M, including component and engine support, exclusive aircraft inspections, engineering and line maintenance.

Jalameddin Elarbed, Air Côte d'Ivoire director of engineering, said: "We are very glad to work with AFI KLM E&M, which has more than 94 years of maintenance experience, and to receive its support and training, which strengthened the relationship and cooperation between our companies."



## Best Fly partners with Corjet Maintenance

Angola-based Best Fly Group has announced it has formed a strategic partnership with Spanish company Corjet Maintenance.

Under the terms of the agreement, Best Fly Maintenance will benefit from Corjet's EASA Part 145 knowledge and experience, enabling the newly formed business to offer a wide range of maintenance solutions in Angola and the surrounding region. Best Fly Maintenance will effectively become an

extension of Corjet Maintenance in Africa, offering equivalent capabilities in terms of aircraft maintenance. Corjet will also provide human resources and training programmes to Best Fly engineers and technicians in Luanda and at its main base station in Madrid.

"This is the first time a MRO agreement of this type has been developed and implemented to bolster executive aviation in Angola," said Carlos Carbó, chairman of Corjet Maintenance.

## Heliconia brings AW139s to Morocco

AgustaWestland has signed a distributor agreement with Morocco's Heliconia Aero Solutions.

Heliconia placed a first order for two AW139 intermediate twin helicopters, plus a number of options, to perform offshore transport missions in Morocco.

Pending delivery of the two helicopters, set for June/July this year, Heliconia has begun its offshore transportation missions with two AW139s leased from Agusta Westland – the first use of the type in the Moroccan market.

## AJW Aviation's Peace deal

AJW Aviation has signed a two-year contract with Nigerian airline Air Peace to provide power-by-the-hour support for its four B737-500 aircraft.

AJW will support Air Peace from its significant inventory network of around 450,000 service-ready Boeing and Airbus components valued at more than US\$450 million and located in strategic hubs worldwide.

## GECAS delivers Boeing 777 to Kenya

GE Capital Aviation Services (GECAS), the

commercial aircraft leasing arm of GE, announced in May the delivery of a new leased Boeing 777ER aircraft to Kenya Airways to expand the carrier's fleet.

The aircraft comes from GECAS' existing order book with Boeing.

## Emirates renews its Seychelles support

Emirates Airlines has renewed its support for the Seychelles by extending a MoU, which unites the two in jointly promoting the destination throughout the airline's network.

Under the agreement, Emirates has committed to working towards increasing

the visibility of the destination with its agents, customers and media and to work with the Seychelles Tourism Board to support its promotional events and campaigns.

## Manentsa named as SAA chief pilot

South African Airways (SAA) has announced Captain Eric Manentsa as its new chief pilot. His appointment became effective on June 1.

The announcement, which was made by Malusi Gigaba, Minister of Public Enterprises, follows the retirement in July last year of captain Johnny Woods, who was the chief pilot and head of flight operations.

Captain Manentsa has been flying for SAA for 20 years and has been fleet captain on the Airbus A319/A320 fleet for the past six years. As chief pilot he will be responsible for the airline's 800 pilots in terms of their day-to-day function, ensuring the company remains compliant to local and international regulations.

## TAAG Angola Airlines connects

TAAG Angola Airlines has become OnAir's first sub-Saharan African customer – line fitting its new Boeing 777-300ER fleet with Internet OnAir and Mobile OnAir. The airline now uses Thales' TopConnect to access OnAir's inflight Wi-Fi and mobile phone services on its new fleet.



## Kenya takes its first Dreamliner

Kenya Airways celebrated the delivery and flyaway of its first 787 Dreamliner in April.

The aircraft departed Paine Field in Everett, Washington State, for a 7,800nm (14,456km) non-stop flight to the Kenyan flag-carrier's home base at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi.

The 787 will form the backbone of the airline's future long-haul fleet, providing

greater range, improved efficiencies and outstanding passenger comfort.

Titus Naikuni, chief executive officer, Kenya Airways, said: "The 787 will enable Kenya Airways to explore new markets, improve its economic performance, provide passengers with revolutionary comfort, while continuing to contribute towards the sustainable development of Africa."





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"We need [governments] to understand the important economic catalyst that aviation can be. Airlines are highly taxed and subject to onerous regulation. One element of the success of the Gulf carriers is that governments in this region have avoided this. They understand that the real value of aviation is the global connectivity it provides and the growth and development it stimulates, not the tax receipts that can be extracted from it."  
TONY TYLER

# The lessons Africa can learn from Gulf growth

*CEOs and senior management of some 240 airlines travelled to Qatari capital Doha for the International Air Transport Association (IATA) annual meeting. Alan Dron reports.*

**T**he first AGM to be held in the Gulf, the Doha gathering was regarded by many as an acknowledgement of how the airline world's centre of gravity has tilted towards the region over the past decade.

Over that period, the share of global traffic accounted for by Middle East airlines has more than doubled, from 4% to 9%, with Qatar Airways, Emirates Airline and Etihad Airways responsible for a large proportion of that growth.

Appropriately, given this seismic shift, the CEO of Qatar Airways, Akbar Al Baker, presided over the formal sessions.

Highlights of the AGM included:  
■ IATA director-general and CEO, Tony Tyler, noting that, despite airlines carrying 3.3 billion

passengers and 52 million tonnes of freight this year, enormous potential remained to be tapped if the aviation industry adopted a 'global mindset';

- Following the disappearance of Malaysian Airlines flight MH370, IATA's aircraft tracking task force is expecting to be able to deliver its options for monitoring airliners by September;
- A unanimously passed resolution calling on governments and the industry to cooperate on developing a balanced package of measures to deter what has become the significant problem of unruly passengers;
- And progress reported on the new distribution capability (NDC), which aims to modernise

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on Page 18

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the way that airlines' products are presented through travel agents.

In his 'state of the industry' speech, Tyler noted the economic effects of the airline industry, creating some 58 million jobs globally and being responsible for \$2.4 trillion of economic activity annually.

Despite the importance to the global economy, airlines were still operating on wafer-thin profit margins, he said. While their global net profits of \$18 billion this year sounded impressive, their profit margin was a slender 2.5%, with carriers making on average less than \$6 income from each passenger.

This had improved from 1.8% in 2013 and just 0.9% in 2012. However, there remained "very little buffer to protect profitability in the face of an increased tax, a rise in the price of fuel, a new charge, or a change in the economic outlook".

On safety, he said that in 2013 there were 29 million flights with western-built jet aircraft and only 12 hull losses, and that the IATA operational safety audit (IOSA) was a major factor in this achievement.

Noting that Qatar Airways had been the first to join the IOSA registry, 392 airlines had now followed it and their safety performance was significantly better than the average for non-IOSA registered airlines.



To further improve this performance, 'enhanced-IOSA' would be a requirement for all of the association's members from 2015. This would change the oversight of an airline's safety performance from a 'snapshot' at one particular moment to constant monitoring.

However, the disappearance of flight MH370 was a reminder that the industry could never rest on its laurels.

"The loss of MH370 points us to an immediate need," said Tyler. "A large commercial airliner going missing without a trace for so long is unprecedented in modern aviation. And it must not happen again. IATA, ICAO and experts from around the world are working together to agree on the best options to improve global tracking capabilities. In September, a draft of recommendations will be given to ICAO.

"Data will guide this and other safety improvements. We are moving forward with the global aviation data management project (GADM). This will create the world's largest resource of operational information. Fuelled by data collected from partners including ICAO, the FAA and EASA, it is perfectly consistent with the global mind-set needed for aviation's second century."

**"The loss of MH370 points us to an immediate need. A large commercial airliner going missing without a trace for so long is unprecedented in modern aviation. And it must not happen again."**

TONY TYLER

Another theme heard throughout the meeting was airlines' relationships with governments. "We need [governments] to understand the important economic catalyst

that aviation can be," said Tyler. "Airlines are highly taxed and subject to onerous regulation. One element of the success of the Gulf carriers is that governments in this region have avoided this. They understand that the real value of aviation is the global connectivity it provides and the growth and development it stimulates, not the tax receipts that can be extracted from it."

As AGM chairman, Al Baker was in ebullient mood, wielding the gavel with brio and dealing with a swathe of questions on both industry and local matters in a closing press conference.

He clearly felt happier with IATA than some years ago, when he accused it of being run by a cabal of legacy carriers that were unresponsive to the needs of their Middle East counterparts.

His adoption as a board member has given the region's airlines a voice at the highest echelons of the organisation and his good relations with Tyler – a natural diplomat with a striking contrast in style to the more dramatic character of his predecessor, Giovanni Bisignani – was readily apparent.



Al Baker accepted that airspace congestion in the Gulf was a major problem – "We need more space to ensure our expansion" – and talks were under way with the region's regulators to create a more efficient air traffic management system.

A wide-ranging panel discussion that included International Airlines Group CEO Willie Walsh and other senior executives, such as Dave Barger of Jet Blue and Ivan Chu of Cathay Pacific, looked at the question of tracking airliners more closely in the aftermath of the MH370 tragedy. It was noted that the technology was already available; all said that cost would not be a stumbling block if it was decided by the industry and regulators that all airliners should carry new equipment.

The vexed question of state aid to carriers raised its head again immediately before the



AGM got under way, with reports that Etihad had access to an interest-free \$3 billion loan from Abu Dhabi's ruling family – a claim contested by the airline.

During the panel discussion, Al Baker noted that European airlines – notably Alitalia – were receiving what was, in effect, state aid through a government-brokered deal that saw the struggling Italian airline receive a €500 million (\$675 million) cash infusion late last year. This, said Al Baker, was a clear example of double standards by European airlines, which was "shameful".



At the closing press conference he batted away the inevitable questions about airlines in which Qatar Airways was rumoured to be interested in taking a stake.

He had no intention of investing in US airlines, nor Italy's Meridiana Fly, he said.

However, he was less dismissive when asked by a journalist if he planned to invest in India's Indigo low-cost carrier. "I was hoping to avoid that question," he smiled. "We're very keen to invest in Indigo if it's available. It's the most efficient, effective and progressively-run Indian carrier and we always like to associate ourselves with success."

He described India as "a sleeping economic giant" with great opportunities, but previous Indian governments had not taken advantage of these.

Most importantly, he said, New Delhi should rein in private airport operators from levying heavy charges on airlines that wanted to use their facilities: "It's untenable for airlines that have very low margins to continue to pay very high airport charges."

Al Baker poured cold water on suggestions that Qatar should follow Abu Dhabi and apply to have a US immigration and customs pre-clearance facility at Doha's new Hamad International Airport.

Passport clearance, he said, was not part of Qatar Airways' business and he was not prepared to take the risk of his aircraft being delayed by customs inspections of passengers' luggage.

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*When Marlene Manave took up basketball at college, little did she know her interest in the sport would ultimately win her the top job as CEO of LAM Mozambique Airlines (and a husband too). Victoria Moores reports.*

# How CEO Marlene got on the ball at LAM

«D'un terrain de basket à la direction générale de LAM » – Page 22

“I got employed at LAM through basketball,” Marlene Manave casually revealed over a relaxed lunch in the Mombasa sunshine, prompting intrigued looks from the other African Airlines Association (AFRAA) delegates at our table.

Manave, sporting a pair of her trademark sky-high heels, laughed at everyone’s sudden interest and admitted her short stature made her an unlikely player.

“Samora Machel, the first Mozambique president after independence, decided every company should sponsor a sports team, so all the players could get employment. My team was linked with LAM and I met my husband there. We got married and then he went to work for the railways and I went to work for LAM,” she explained. “One decision can make a difference to your whole life.”

Her first role was in LAM’s finance department, touching almost every part of the airline’s operation. Then she moved to commercial, where she handled interlines, tariffs and pool agreements.

After a 13-year break working for American aid agency USAID, Manave returned to LAM in 2006 and became heavily involved in the airline’s restructuring before becoming CEO in April 2011.

“I remember thinking wow, I owe this to my team,” she said, smiling fondly at the memory. And does LAM still sponsor the sport? “Of course. Now more than ever!”

While Manave may have moved on from her restructuring role to become CEO, she remains heavily focused on consolidating and strengthening LAM’s operations. The company’s strategic plan for

Continued  
on Page 22



Marlene Manave:  
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make a difference to  
your whole life.”

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2014 to 2018 aims for sustainable growth, a recapitalisation, increased profits, staff development and defining a new business model.

In mid-November, LAM took a step towards achieving these goals by placing an order for three new Boeing 737-700s, scheduled for delivery in 2015-17. At the same time it took purchase rights on another three aircraft. While awaiting these new additions, it is leasing another 737NG this year. These aircraft will substitute LAM's sole 737-500, which will be returned in 2015.

"In Africa, Boeing is the easiest type to operate. Airbus also offered us a good deal, but what made the difference is that Boeing has more aircraft in Africa. It is easier to get assistance and spares and our technical people all feel more comfortable with Boeing," she explained.

Manave will use these aircraft to expand LAM's network, tapping demand created by Mozambique's oil, gas and other hydrocarbon reserves. However, she remains unconvinced by a new airport, which is being constructed at Nacala to serve these industries.



Due for completion this year, Nacala is located further north than Maputo, near to Mozambique's main deep-water port. The new facility is slated to become the country's new intercontinental hub and the government is aiming to move all the major airlines to Nacala over the next two years

"I am very scared that it will become a white elephant. I will not base the airline there. It's just an airport and you need to grow other facilities to make it viable. I don't see the [intercontinental hub] swap happening so fast – I think it's going to take about 10 to 15 years, but that might change. We may have a base in Nacala as well, but we will never move there."

Returning to the fleet, LAM has not been exactly successful in phasing out the Embraer 120s operated by its fully owned subsidiary, Mozambique Express (MEX).

In fact, the airline has acquired a fourth aircraft, rather than getting rid of its existing three. "The Embraer 120s will be out of the fleet – that is the recommendation – but I don't know when. We now have a fourth because we have this mining project and they wanted dedicated aircraft," she said.

In February and March 2013, LAM brought in a pair of Embraer ERJ-145s to operate direct services from Mozambique's secondary cities to regional destinations within Africa. These were meant to replace the Embraer 120s, but they still arrived as planned. This takes LAM and MEX's

**"I am very scared that Nacala will become a white elephant. I will not base the airline there."**  
**MARLENE MANAVE**

**SOMMAIRE**



*Quand Marlene Manave décida de se joindre à l'équipe de basketball de son collègue, elle ne se doutait guère que cela lui permettrait de rencontrer son futur mari et de décrocher le poste de directeur général de LAM Mozambique Airlines.*

Une enquête de **Victoria Moores**.

**D'un terrain de basket à la direction générale de LAM**

« J'ai été embauchée chez LAM Mozambique Airlines (LAM) grâce au basket-ball », révélait Marlene Manave lors d'un récent déjeuner informel de l'AFRAA à Mombasa. Elle se souvient du rôle de l'ancien président mozambicain, Samora Machel, au niveau du parrainage des équipes sportives par les entreprises du pays.

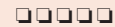
Marlene Manave a débuté sa carrière au service financier de LAM. Après avoir travaillé 13 ans pour l'agence américaine USAID, elle revient en 2006 pour s'impliquer dans la restructuration de la compagnie avant d'en devenir la directrice générale en avril 2011.

LAM compte étoffer son réseau face à la demande croissante des industries pétrolières et gazières du Mozambique. Elle doit prendre livraison de trois nouveaux Boeing 737-700 d'ici 2015-2017. LAM n'a pas encore eu le succès escompté suite à décision de sortir progressivement des Embraer 120 de sa flotte. Celle-ci comprend aujourd'hui quatre Embraer 120, trois Bombardier Q400, deux ERJ-145, deux Embraer 190 et un Boeing 737-500. Le plan stratégique 2014-2018 vise, entre autres, une croissance durable et une formation accrue du personnel.

LAM et ses partenaires, dont le français Bolloré, comptent également s'associer pour créer « LAM logistics », une entité

chargée des opérations de fret et de cargo principalement depuis Maputo et entre les villes de Palma et Pemba.

Même si LAM a besoin de développer son marché domestique et régional, la compagnie mène des études avec Boeing sur le projet « LAM International » afin d'opérer de nouveaux des routes long-courriers. Elle sera apte, d'ici deux ans, selon Marlene Manave, à voler de manière rentable vers des destinations lointaines.



L'autre défi de LAM demeure la maîtrise de ses coûts d'exploitation. Selon Marlene Manave, le gouvernement mozambicain, a investi dans de nouvelles installations aéroportuaires mais il est en train de répercuter ces coûts sur les compagnies aériennes. Elle se demande comment on pourrait encourager les personnes à voyager avec des taxes aéroportuaires si élevées.

A noter par ailleurs, qu'un Embraer 190 de LAM s'est écrasé en Namibie, faisant 33 victimes. Il semblerait que le capitaine se soit enfermé seul dans le cockpit avec « l'intention de crasher l'avion ».

Malgré ces difficultés, Marlene Manave participe toujours à des tournois de basket-ball dès qu'elle le peut, et continue de soutenir le sport dans son pays.

fleet to four Embraer 120s, three Bombardier Q400s, two ERJ-145s, two Embraer 190s and a Boeing 737-500.

At one time, Manave was considering converting an Embraer 120 to a freighter as part of her ambition to revive and develop

LAM's cargo business. However, a new joint venture with French oil and gas logistics firm Bolloré means LAM is now eyeing far larger aircraft, most likely an Antonov An-26.

"This [the Embraer 120 conversion] was one of our options when we were thinking of doing it [the cargo operation] ourselves, but now it might be a bigger aircraft because we would be flying for the mining industry, which involves large equipment. They have been using a Russian aircraft, the

Antonov An-26, from Johannesburg to Pemba so it might be something similar to that," she said.

The partners are teaming up to create LAM Logistics, which will handle all of LAM's belly cargo and dedicated freighter operations. The main freight flows will be between Maputo and the provinces, although LAM Logistics will also connect Palma with the port city of Pemba, which are both located in Cabo Delgado, the northernmost province of Mozambique.

Bolloré will bring its expertise and knowledge to the joint venture and is likely to take a 51% stake. "Originally, it was meant to be 50:50, but they would like to have a 51% while we would hold 49%. I don't see any big problem with that," said Manave.

Her other big joint venture project, LAM International, is moving more





# 10

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slowly. Manave has been studying the potential for LAM to return to mid- and long-haul services, with input from Boeing. This would involve a financial, strategic or airline backer, similar to the cargo initiative. "The study said we should not start this because we need to develop our domestic and regional market to build up demand," she explained.

LAM was thinking of at least launching services to Lisbon, but research revealed that the traffic is predominantly people visiting friends and relations. "We would have full flights for three months, but the rest of the year we won't be able to fill these aircraft so we need to build up our regional traffic first."

This fits well with the airline's existing strategy, which has focused on strengthening its local network. "As LAM develops that, it's going to be a great springboard for LAM International in the future. I think that within two years LAM will be fit to fly to some of those destinations, and do it profitably, with wide-body aircraft. Lisbon might be one of those destinations, along with Rio and Sao Paulo."



In the meantime, LAM might be able to use two new resources to expand its network. The new airport at Nacala is two hours' flight time closer to Europe and Asia and, coupled with the 5.5-hour range of its new 737-700s, this could bring destinations like Dubai and Mumbai within reach. "This would be from 2015 onwards, because we don't have the aircraft now," said Manave.

This all rests on whether LAM can successfully tap Mozambique's market potential. Manave had just got back from Panama, where she had been speaking with the CEO of Copa Airlines.

"He was saying they have a population of 3 million people, but they carry 11 million passengers. That's nearly four times their population! We have a population of 23 million, so even if we could carry 50% of them, it would be good. However, we only carry 1 million, which means we have lots of potential, lots of room to grow. If there is enough investment, we will definitely make it."

Another challenge is spiralling operating costs. The Mozambique Government has invested in new facilities, but it is passing the cost on to the airlines. "How are we going to get people to travel if the airport tax is so high? They have increased the charges by 17% and that's just for the buildings, not even work on the runways."

The answer could lie in a game of basketball. After all, the CEO of Maputo Airport played on her husband's team. "That makes it easier," laughs Manave. "If you play sport you're used to working with people, to being part of a team."

Despite the challenges of running LAM, Manave still participates in masters-level basketball tournaments whenever she can. The

## MAIS hoping to grow in the Mozambique sun

*Mozambique is booming. New oil and gas reserves have been discovered, tourism is on the rise and the government is supporting this flurry of activity with new hotels and airports. Against this backdrop, Victoria Moores meets a man who believes that now is the perfect time to launch a hybrid carrier.*

**Francisco Giao is the CEO and project promoter for start-up airline Mozambique Air Services (MAIS).**

**When we first meet, he is chatting with the CEO of Thailand's Nok Air at a conference in London, getting some pointers on what it takes to launch a successful low-cost carrier.**

**"We hope to start operations in the second quarter of 2014," said Giao. "We are looking at a hybrid model and we are learning a lot about cost management from discussions with low-cost carriers."**

**However, Giao recognises that MAIS cannot be another Ryanair, as this would not suit the Mozambique market.**

**"The model must be adapted to the country. We want to offer low fares, but we have 17% VAT on domestic flights and local taxes are increasing; we have to pay \$17 airport tax per passenger. Fuel is also very expensive compared with Europe, representing 42% of direct operating costs.**

**"This increases the final price, so you can't compare it to European fares, but we will look to offer the lowest possible price to our clients. We believe that a hybrid model will be best for the airline and also for the local market in Mozambique."**

**MAIS is backed by two Mozambique equity investors – Brifair Logistics Moçambique and Sociedade de Gestao e Controlo de Participacoes Sociais (GCP).**

**Giao is the glue that holds these two main shareholders**

**together; he is director general at Brifair and senior partner at both companies.**

**The start-up aims to launch with a pair of dry-leased, single-class Airbus A319s, operating between the main cities in Mozambique. "We expect to add another aircraft at the start of our third year of operation, growing to between five and seven aircraft by the end of our fifth year," said Giao.**

**MAIS will not be based at Maputo, Mozambique's main hub. Instead, it has selected Nacala, a new airport located close to Mozambique's main deep-**

**water port. If the new Nacala airport is not ready in time for the MAIS launch, Giao will, instead, begin services from Beira, operating morning flights to key cities such as Maputo. "About 90% of LAM Mozambique flights start in the early morning from Maputo. Our strategy is to do that in reverse, flying into Maputo in the morning," he explained.**

**Initially MAIS will operate domestic flights, serving the cities of Beira, Nacala, Nampula, Quelimane and Tete. Some of these airports need upgrading but Giao said Aeroportos de Moçambique (ADM) is already working on improving its facilities, giving Pemba as an example.**

**Later MAIS plans to add regional services to Angola, South Africa, southern Democratic Republic of Congo (Lubumbashi), Tanzania (Dar es Salaam) and Zimbabwe (Harare).**

### SOMMAIRE

#### Une place sous le soleil du Mozambique

Francisco Giao est le directeur général de même que le promoteur de la start-up Mozambique Air Services (MAIS). La compagnie espère lancer ses opérations au cours du premier semestre de cette année et offrir le meilleur prix possible à ses clients. Le passager devra cependant payer 17% de TVA sur les vols intérieurs et 17 dollars de taxe d'aéroport. Le coût du carburant reste également très élevé au Mozambique.

MAIS est soutenue par deux investisseurs : Brifair Logistics Mozambique et la GCP. Elle a choisi le nouvel aéroport Nacala (et non Maputo) pour implanter ses activités. Les travaux devraient prendre fin en 2015. MAIS prévoit de louer deux Airbus A319 qui opéreront entre les principales villes du Mozambique (Beira, Nacala, Nampula, Quelimane et Tete).

three-day contest typically runs in September, attracting about 30 teams from several African countries.

"It used to be hard to get us off the court, but now it's the reverse. You play for five minutes and you say 'enough!'"

"Now I am playing on the LAM team again, but since becoming CEO I haven't had the time to go. I've always been busy. I think I've only been once, just for one game, and then I came back. Mozambique will host next year, so I will be playing."

As far as hobbies go, one that helps you find a husband, get a high-ranking job, network with your main supplier, build up a network of life-long friends and keep you fit must be pretty rare. And it makes a great lunchtime anecdote too.

### Tragedy strikes

Sadly, just four days after that light-hearted lunch in Mombasa, a LAM Mozambique Embraer 190 crashed in Namibia, killing all 33 people on board.

Preliminary findings indicate that the captain locked the first officer out of the cockpit with a clear intention to crash the jet. This ranks as Mozambique's worst air accident since 1986, when a presidential jet crash claimed the life of Samora Machel, the president behind the sports initiative.

This could not have happened at a worse time for LAM. It has worked hard to modernise its fleet – the aircraft involved in the accident was just a year old – and it had passed its IOSA audit just a month earlier. It is also aiming to get off the European Union 'blacklist', but it seems the actions of one rogue pilot could have put these efforts in jeopardy.

Safety is a key pillar of LAM CEO Marlene Manave's business plan for 2014-18, which is founded on credibility, convenience, comfort and choice.

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## *TAALKS with Peter Belobaba, MIT Professor*

**T**urkish Aviation Academy has commenced a series of conferences under the name "Towards Knowledge / Turkish Aviation Academy Leading Knowledge Series" (TAALKS). TAALKS conferences have been launched to deliver lecture-like speeches which aim to broaden horizons by bringing acknowledged academics, scientists, managers and experts in the fields of science, technical, management etc. from different countries of the world together with the professionals from Turkish Airlines. The guest speaker of the first TAALKS Program, which was held on March 12, was Prof. Peter Belobaba from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Prof. Peter Belobaba, one of the doyens of the aviation management, works as a senior research specialist and scientist at Massachusetts

Institute of Technology's International Center for Air Transportation and continues to give lectures for a post-graduate program, jointly run by Istanbul Technical University and Turkish Airlines. In his speech titled "Overview of Global Airline Industry and Strategies: Current Trends and Future Outlook", Prof. Belobaba shared his various statistical predictions for the future by analyzing the recent past of the industry and the current trends on the basis of main concepts, especially those regarding revenue management. Both our managers and participants from different universities showed great interest in this speech.

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*Punto Azul managing director Paul Richards is fully aware of the challenges of start-up airlines, having set up six different carriers in the Caribbean, Europe and Middle East during his 35-plus years in the industry. But this has not put him off doing it all again, this time in Equatorial Guinea. Victoria Moores investigates.*

**P**aul Richards joined privately-owned Punto Azul in February 2013 as ground operations director at a time when the Malabo-based airline only performed charter flights for the oil and gas sector.

By May, Punto Azul had launched its first scheduled flights and by June Richards had been promoted to managing director.

He was suddenly tasked with managing the new business model and handling the rapid arrival of two Embraer ERJ-145s, a new type for Punto Azul that has been wet-leased from National Airways Corporation (NAC) in Johannesburg.

In among all this, Richards also had to re-write Punto Azul's five-year business plan, draft a 10-year strategy and start work towards its own air operator's certificate (AOC) and IOSA certification.

One year on, things are going well. "The airline has seen phenomenal growth in passenger numbers from a paltry 3,100 passengers per month in June 2013 to a peak of 12,000 a month during the high season.

"By December 2013, we had uplifted a total of more than 90,000 passengers. As of March 2014, we were averaging 9,000 passengers per month across the network with a load factor of 66%," said Richards. "People are watching us like hawks, looking for operational stability, because a lot of airlines come and go very quickly in this region."



So far, so good, especially with a 65% break-even load-factor. But, despite the strong launch performance, Richards has told Punto Azul's shareholders that the airline is unlikely to make a profit just yet. "I don't expect us to turn a profit in the immediate future. We need to strive to increase revenues month by month. I would like to say we will break even next year, but let's wait and see."

Punto Azul's short history dates back to 2010, when its core business was oil and gas charters. Despite having a population of fewer than one million, Equatorial Guinea is sub-Saharan Africa's third largest oil exporter and has a thriving economy, so work for the oil and gas sector still plays a strong role in Punto Azul's business.

Over the last year it has secured a

**"We serve Africa and the company is owned by Africans. It is wholly run by the sons and daughters of Africa."**  
YISSEHAK ZEWOLDI

# Richards the seventh

«Richards VII » – Page 30



number of corporate contracts, including one from major player Hess Oil. These staff travel contracts usually require an audit and Richards said Punto Azul has already successfully cleared a number of these checks.

Richards had a similar experience at one of his previous carriers, Abu Dhabi-based Maximus Air Cargo, which he drove through the IOSA audit programme. The airline was still audited by some clients afterwards, but the IOSA certificate simplified things. Besides Maximus, Richards' CV also includes time with UK carrier Dan-Air, Canada's Ward Air, Wales-headquartered Inter European Airways, Irish carriers Transaer and EU Jet, Saudi low-cost Sama Airlines and REDjet in the Caribbean.

Fresh out of Maximus, Richards was pleasantly surprised when he arrived in this tiny African country, which comprises a little chunk of mainland sandwiched between

Cameroon and Gabon and five inhabited islands – including Bioko Island where the capital, Malabo, is located. "Equatorial Guinea really is a hidden jewel. I was quite amazed when I arrived. It is a lovely place and the people are very friendly," he said.

From the launch of its initial scheduled service between Malabo and Bata in May 2013, Punto Azul has rapidly expanded its scheduled network and it now performs regional flights to Accra in Ghana, Douala in Cameroon, Libreville in Gabon and Sao Tome. This represents steady progress in its quest to connect Malabo with the key regional business and leisure destinations in central and west Africa.

"We are busy at the moment trying to obtain regional traffic rights. It's not as easy as it is in Europe and North America. Getting to the right people to sign the papers is a challenge in itself," said Richards. "Flights to Nigeria, Benin, Togo, DRC, Republic of Congo and other regional destinations are still at the planning stage."

To further its scheduled business, Punto Azul has also signed a GDS agreement with Hahn Air,



**“People are watching us like hawks, looking for operational stability, because a lot of airlines come and go very quickly in this region.”**

PAUL RICHARDS

which means its flights will be seen by more than 90,000 travel agencies in 190 countries.

The two ERJ-145s, which are wet-leased from NAC, but owned by Embraer subsidiary ECC Leasing, are now fully enmeshed in the scheduled operation. However, Punto Azul is now planning to shift to buying and operating its own aircraft. “We have purchased a Hawker 800XP, which was due for delivery around June this year, marking an important milestone one year into our scheduled flight operations,” said Richards.

He added that Punto Azul is also negotiating a fleet increase – or change in the longer term – with an unnamed major European company. Depending on traffic growth, Punto Azul may ultimately switch to larger aircraft, like Embraer 190s or Boeing 737s.

□□□□□

In the meantime, Richards plans to move the two ERJ-145s to dry lease and switch them to the Equatorial Guinea register, followed by other aircraft. After the transition, it is envisaged NAC Aviation will continue to provide long-term engineering and maintenance for the Punto Azul fleet.

Work has begun towards Punto Azul’s own AOC and, soon after, Richards is hoping to secure IOSA certification. “IOSA will be a requirement by 2015 anyhow, but this is the only way forward,” said Richards, who is planning to “beef up” his team with more expat consultants in the final drive to these clearances.

Owing to the skills shortage in Equatorial Guinea, Punto Azul plans to initially use pilots from overseas and local cabin crew. Richards admits that the skills shortage is a real challenge, but the prime minister has just announced plans to create a new aviation training academy in Mongomeyen, which should help.

“This came as quite a surprise to us. They will have a college there for the region, specialising in aviation. That is a very interesting project and we will definitely support it when it becomes operational. I think it will be for cabin crew and handling staff initially, doing courses in CRM, dangerous goods and security. Keeping it in the region is the best way to go and it is more cost-effective for the airlines. At the moment airlines are sending pilots and cabin crews to either South Africa or the Middle East. We have just signed an agreement with FlightSafety [International] in Paris for the ERJs and in Farnborough for the Hawker.”

Continued  
on Page 30

Punto Azul has set out with a pair of Embraer EMB-145s but hopes to get larger aircraft such as Boeing 737s as it grows.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

This training project is indicative of a drive by the Equatorial Guinea Government to sharpen up its air transport infrastructure and oversight, as it seeks removal from the European Union's blacklist. Richards said the country is making "great strides" and the authorities are "taking control", implementing all sorts of rules and regulations to ensure that airlines follow ICAO, FAA and EASA standards. "I fully agree this is the only way to ensure safe operations. It is up to people to turn themselves around. I have come in from a European background to put procedures and practices in place. Normally that doesn't work well, but people are accepting the changes. The majority of my management team are expats, but we have recently hired an ERJ captain from the region as our flight operations post-holder and more locals will be brought in as we progress," he explained.



Richards has no plans to fly to Europe in the foreseeable future, but the blacklisting still has an impact on Punto Azul's business. "If Equatorial Guinea wasn't on the blacklist, it would be a lot easier to do business with the oil and gas companies and to tie up codeshares with big carriers."

This is one of the reasons why Punto Azul teamed up with NAC. "They have a good record, the right crews and give good support. We could have found someone who is cheaper, but they wouldn't have been as reliable or safe."

It is safe to say that Richards has plenty on his plate, coping with the scheduled expansion, "quite horrendous" taxes and government charges, along with delivery of the new business plan, the AOC application and IOSA certification. Then again, he has done it all before... and yet he still keeps coming back to do it all again.

SOMMAIRE

# Richards VII

*Paul Richards, directeur général de Punto Azul, est pleinement conscient des défis auxquels sont confrontés les nouvelles compagnies aériennes après avoir mis en place six « start-up » dans les Caraïbes, en Europe et au Moyen-Orient. Cela ne l'empêche pas de récidiver en Afrique de l'ouest.*

L'histoire de Punto Azul en Afrique remonte à 2010 quand la compagnie aérienne avait lancé des vols charters pour l'industrie pétrolière et gazière à Malabo, la capitale de la Guinée équatoriale. L'expiration du contrat a cependant bouleversé l'activité de la compagnie qui travaille pour l'obtention des certifications AOC et IOSA.

« Tant que Punto Azul n'a pas eu un audit de sécurité des compagnies pétrolières et gazières, elle ne peut pas opérer pour ces dernières. Si elle obtient le feu vert d'une grande société alors les autres suivront », explique Paul Richards.

Punto Azul a donc lancé officiellement ses opérations à Malabo en mai 2013. Elle dispose de 3 Embraer ERJ-145 en location. Punto Azul envisage l'achat d'avions et doit prendre livraison d'un Hawker 800XP en juin 2014. Bata devient la première destination domestique avec trois fréquences quotidiennes. Paul Richards prévoit plus de destinations pour le marché intérieur.

« Nous essayons maintenant d'obtenir des droits pour le trafic régional mais cela reste un véritable défi », souligne Paul Richards espérant opérer trois vols par semaine vers Accra (Ghana) ou Libreville (Gabon), au Congo ou encore des vols quotidiens vers Douala au Cameroun. Punto Azul a également signé un accord avec Hahn Air, ses vols

seront désormais visibles depuis plus de 90 000 agences de voyages dans 190 pays.

Punto Azul est en discussion avec Ceiba Intercontinental ou encore Camair Co pour nouer d'éventuels partenariats. Elle affiche une belle progression de son taux de remplissage. Paul Richards reconnaît cependant qu'il est difficile d'atteindre le seuil de rentabilité pour l'instant.

Il envisage aussi de muscler son équipe. En raison de la pénurie de compétences, Punto Azul embauchera d'abord des pilotes étrangers et souhaite recruter des PNC locaux. Le gouvernement a cependant annoncé la création d'un nouveau centre de formation. Ce projet est important car il vise à enlever la Guinée équatoriale de la liste noire de l'Union européenne. Le pays surveille davantage les compagnies et veille au respect des normes de l'OACI, de la FAA ou de l'AESA. C'est d'autant plus important pour Paul Richards s'il veut planifier des vols vers l'Europe.

Punto Azul pourra envisager des opérations avec des avions à plus grande capacité comme l'Embraer 190 ou le Boeing 737 dépendant de la croissance du trafic. Mais Paul Richards doit avant tout gérer les affaires courantes comme les nouvelles routes, le paiement des divers impôts et taxes ainsi que la certification AOC et IOSA prévue pour début 2014 qui lui permettra de changer de cap.

« Nous essayons maintenant d'obtenir des droits pour le trafic régional mais cela reste un véritable défi. »  
Paul Richards



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# Jambo faces up to

*After three years on the drawing board, Kenya Airways' new low-cost operator, Jambo Jet, has finally taken off. Now, as Keith Mwanalushi finds out from the airline's CEO, the success of the LCC venture will depend on a whole different set of rules.*

**P**rotectionism and high fuel costs have seen low-cost carriers (LCCs) in Africa disappear from the scene even before they become properly established, leaving the likes of FastJet to pick up the pieces.

In April this year, Nairobi-based Jambo Jet became the latest contender to try its hand at tapping into the huge percentage of an African population that has, by-and-large, never travelled by air, as well as the growing middle class that is emerging.

Some sceptics initially saw the idea of Kenya Airways (KQ) establishing an LCC as a risky gamble. They argued that the infrastructure was not mature enough to handle the demand. The issue now is whether Jambo can learn from lessons of the past.

"Support from Kenya Airways helped get things up and running," declared Willem Hondius, Jambo Jet's managing director and CEO. "We make full use of them, our maintenance and purchasing is done through them and we also share call centre and sales offices."



Hondius explained that airline start-ups face all kinds of issues in Africa – many of them being very challenging – such as getting an AOC in time. "You will find many obstacles in your way, [so] teaming up with the national airline and doing things together makes life much easier," he said.

Before getting the airline off the ground, Hondius and his team had to tackle the issue of distribution. This differs somewhat to the approach in Europe and, in particular, the US. "People here want to see someone and look them in the eye when they buy a ticket. Its either they find it very difficult or there is a reluctance to pay through the internet. However, it's worth noting that internet penetration is quite high here, and it's mostly via mobile," Hondius said.

Despite the growing use of mobile technologies across every spectrum of life in Kenya, and across Africa as a whole, there is still a need for physical distribution. "Of course it drives the cost up because of having offices both at the airport and in the town centre. Yes, in some cases some costs are higher, but when you look at other airlines here we are about 40% cheaper," Hondius claimed.



"If you are not related to a mainstream or national carrier, then it's much more difficult."  
WILLEM HONDIUS

Despite the higher costs, Hondius is not easily fazed. He said that evidence showed there was room to save in other areas. "We outsource everything; we don't do anything ourselves," he stressed. We have to concentrate on those areas where we can save."

Hondius added that the company had scrutinised all the normal elements of the low-cost model; flying the same type of aircraft (737-300s in this case); putting in as many seats as possible so that the cost per seat goes down;

flying with fewer cabin attendants; and selling catering rather than giving it away. "We have outsourced the whole catering function to a provider here," he said.

The benefits of the association with KQ goes a long way, according to Hondius. He said Jambo was making use of certain functions so that it did not increase numbers on its own payroll. For instance, it utilises KQ's legal, finance, IT and treasury departments. "We have a company agreement in place with KQ where we pay them

# a mammoth task



**Willem Hondius: "Support from Kenya Airways helped get things up and running. We make full use of them, our maintenance and purchasing is done through them and we also share call centre and sales offices."**

a fee for their services and we don't have to hire these specialists ourselves, so it is possible to lower costs."

Kenya has a population of 42 million and the economy has grown quite strongly in the last decade, which has seen the rise of an affluent middle class that are more inclined to western standards of air travel. "A lot of people work in a different part of Kenya than they originally lived and there are a lot of small and medium sized businesses, so there is quite some potential for air traffic," Hondius observed.

The lack of adequate road infrastructure might also push the travelling public into the open arms of Jambo Jet. Hondius said the infrastructure was being worked on but was still far from adequate. "Nairobi to Mombasa, for instance, is less than 500 kilometres but it takes eight to nine hours by bus – sometimes longer."



A big challenge is being the first mover. When analysing media reports on the launch of the airline, it seems Kenya's masses don't all understand the LCC model completely. Hondius is fully aware that there is a need to educate the market.

According to a popular internet forum on Kenyan aviation, there is quite clearly a shortage of information among Kenyan travellers on how a low-cost carrier works. This may not necessarily be a setback for Jambo Jet at present; if anything, the information gap presents the airline with an opportunity to shape the market and make its brand name synonymous with the term 'low-cost carrier' in much the same way Kenyans identify washing detergent with 'OMO' or shoe polish with 'Kiwi'.

Also noteworthy is the critical need to upgrade Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, in particular after the terminal burned

down last year. The airport is currently operating well over capacity but KQ and other based carriers must have a competitive hub airport that allows for efficient connectivity.

Hondius is aware that even in Europe, and other mature markets, when main carriers try to establish a low-cost offshoot, it doesn't always work. "In Africa it's the other way around," he

said compassionately. "If you are not related to a mainstream or national carrier, then it's much more difficult.

"If you look at South Africa today, the only remaining airlines are Kulula and Mango – and both are related to other airlines. Mango is associated to SAA and Kulula to British Airways/Comair. That's just the way it is."

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*With Egypt's tourism sector still under pressure, one Saudi-backed airline is carving a niche in the regional market. Martin Rivers talks to Ahmed Aly, CEO of Nile Air.*

# The source of Nile's success

«La source du succès de Nile Air» – Page 36

**W**hen Nile Air was publicly unveiled at the 2007 Dubai Airshow – at the height of the Gulf aviation buying spree – the Egyptian start-up signed a memorandum of understanding for nine Airbus A321s. Seven years on, the Saudi-owned company operates a more modest fleet of two smaller A320s. Its launch coincided with the onset of a global financial crisis, followed by two successive political revolutions that decimated tourism to its home market.

But, having weathered these storms, Nile Air is now charting a clear path to expansion. The airline continues to be shielded from the downturn by its diverse traffic mix, and it is gradually benefiting from Egypt's improved ties across the region.

“The markets between Egypt and the Middle East have been extremely resilient,” said Ahmed Aly, the newly appointed chief executive of Nile Air.

“The number of seats being offered between Egypt and Saudi Arabia has grown by 96% when comparing January 2014 to January 2011. They have actually registered exceptional growth despite all the issues occurring in Egypt. And that is very different to the more sensitive European tourism market.”

Nile Air today operates out of three Egyptian airports (Cairo, Alexandria and Luxor), serving five points in Saudi Arabia (Jeddah, Tabuk, Qassim, Ta'if and Yanbu) plus Kuwait.

Much of its inbound traffic comprises Gulf-origin tourism and business flows which, according to Aly, have “held up much better” than from Europe. The fact that Nile Air's owner, Nasser Al-Tayyar, is chairman of Saudi travel firm Al-Tayyar Travel Group undoubtedly spurs demand, giving the airline “very strong clout” among the kingdom's high-spending holidaymakers.

But tourism is just one facet of its customer base, which is evenly split between Egyptian nationals and foreigners. “There's also a large diaspora of Egyptians living in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, so we've got strong visiting friends and relatives (VFR) traffic,” Aly noted. “And Egyptians are the second

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Ahmed Aly: “We're sure that the key markets, particularly western Europe, will rebound, and that opens up new opportunities for us as we grow our fleet.”



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35

largest nationality that travels to Saudi Arabia for religious purposes, which will continue to grow.”

With Nile Air also providing the only business class option on some routes – securing custom from government, military and corporate travellers – the airline has an enviable spread of passenger types which has proven “extremely resilient to the current changing landscape in Egypt”.

Last year saw Nile Air grow its passenger numbers by 21% against load factors of 72%, and the airline remains focused on new expansion opportunities.

Its fleet size will double to four A320s during 2014, Aly confirmed, with operating leases of at least five years being targeted for the new units. Nile Air’s long-standing A321 order, meanwhile, remains active, although there are no imminent plans to begin delivery of the larger variant.

“They are still on order,” the chief executive insisted, adding that “larger capacity aircraft” will become more attractive as Nile Air’s market share rises.

Asked about the appeal of the smaller A320s, Aly described the type as “the most versatile and flexible aircraft” for Egypt today, noting that 90% of traffic to the country originates within a five-hour flying range. The airline has reduced the size of its A320 business class cabins from 16 to eight seats, lifting overall capacity to 164.



Longer term, Nile Air is still finalising its future fleet plan and has not ruled out adding wide-body aircraft at some point. “Wide-bodies will obviously give you lower costs per available seat kilometre (CASKs) and a competitive edge,” Aly said. “It’s certainly something on the radar.”

Putting the expanded fleet to work will undoubtedly require network growth, and the chief executive sees no shortage of target destinations to evaluate.

“When you look at the largest markets out of Egypt, the big three in the Middle East are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE,” he said, hinting at new links with Dubai or Abu Dhabi. About 300,000 Egyptians live in the UAE, making it a potentially lucrative VFR market for Nile Air. “When we look at north Africa, we also see Libya and Sudan as being strong areas for growth in the future.”

But with the Egyptian diaspora estimated at up to eight million, the airline is also now looking beyond the Arab world.

“The UK is a strong market for Egypt given the large Egyptian population there,” Aly noted, pointing to his own roots in Britain. “Likewise with Italy. And Turkey has a liberal visa process for Egyptians, so it’s seen as a good tourist destination. These markets are relatively under-served given their attractiveness.”

Even with the advantage of VFR traffic, however, expanding into Europe will be risky until tourism flows stabilise. Visitor numbers to Egypt

SOMMAIRE

## La source du succès de Nile Air

*Une compagnie aérienne égyptienne se positionne comme un marché de niche dans la région face à un secteur du tourisme toujours sous pression. Martin Rivers s’est entretenu avec Ahmed Aly, directeur général de Nile Air.*

**Nile Air avait signé un protocole d’accord pour l’acquisition de neuf Airbus A321 pour son lancement en 2007. Aujourd’hui, elle exploite seulement deux A320, conséquence directe de la crise financière mondiale et des révolutions politiques successives qui ont freiné le flux touristique. Nile Air est maintenant sur la voie de l’expansion.**

**Nile Air développe son réseau depuis trois aéroports égyptiens (Le Caire, Alexandrie et Louxor) et relie cinq destinations en Arabie Saoudite (Djeddah, Tabuk, Qassim, Ta’if et Yanbu) et le Koweït. Une importante diaspora égyptienne vivant en Arabie Saoudite et au Koweït assure une part importante de son trafic. La compagnie a vu croître le nombre de ses passagers de 21% en 2013, sa flotte va également doubler pour atteindre quatre A320.**

**« Le nombre de sièges entre l’Egypte et l’Arabie saoudite a augmenté de 96% ces trois dernières années malgré les problèmes que connaît l’Egypte », souligne Ahmed Aly, directeur général de Nile Air.**

**Selon Ahmed Aly, la compagnie cherche à étoffer son réseau vers de grands marchés comme les Émirats Arabes Unis, la Libye, le Soudan, le Royaume-Uni, l’Italie et bien sûr la Turquie. Le marché égyptien retrouve graduellement son dynamisme, le pays étant une destination touristique de notoriété mondiale avec son histoire, sa culture et ses plages. Le pays se trouve dans une position stratégique, au carrefour de l’Afrique, l’Asie et l’Europe.**

**La compagnie a lancé en mars dernier des vols entre Le Caire et Djeddah.**

**« Cette route représente le plus grand marché Origine & Destination au Moyen-Orient », ajoute Ahmed Aly.**

**Les autorités ont pris des mesures proactives au niveau du transport aérien. La libéralisation des aéroports hors Caire, en 2004, a abouti à une croissance de 580% des opérations à l’aéroport d’Alexandrie. Même si le rythme des réformes a été plus lent en Egypte, le pays connaît des développements positifs qui seront bénéfiques à l’économie nationale.**

dropped 28% in the first two months of 2014, setting the tone for another challenging year.

Tourism plummeted from 14.7 million visitors in 2010 to just 10 million the following year, when President Hosni Mubarak was overthrown during the Arab Spring uprisings. A tentative recovery in 2012 was promptly derailed by last year’s military coup against the Muslim Brotherhood – pushing the 2013 figure down to 9.5 million – but Aly has no doubts about the long-term prospects for Egyptian aviation.

“We’re sure that the key markets, particularly western Europe, will rebound, and that opens up new opportunities for us as we grow our fleet,” he insisted.

“The Egyptian market is highly dynamic. We’ve got several very strong advantages, which I would define as high-potential. Egypt is a tourism destination with global appeal – the country offers history, culture and beaches. There’s also a significant population centre with more than 85 million people, and a growing middle class. And we have a strategic location, we’re at the crossroads of Africa, Asia and Europe.”

Although Nile Air has begun exploring far-flung destinations, there is no denying that improved relations closer to home have lifted its performance.

Riyadh had been among the strongest regional critics of the ousted Muslim Brotherhood party, straining bilateral relations during the group’s short time in power. But with the two countries now rekindling political and economic links, Aly points to “much stronger volumes coming out of Saudi Arabia” in the summer 2014 season.

Nile Air is perfectly placed to benefit from this trend because of its unique position in the local market. As well as enjoying close ties to a major Saudi travel firm, the airline has carved a niche as a private scheduled carrier in a space traditionally occupied by low-cost charter operators or hub carriers.



“Last year more airlines started to go into scheduled areas,” Aly admitted, likely referring to the evolving strategy of EgyptAir’s regional affiliate Air Cairo. “But we’re not concerned in terms of additional competition, because we believe that the market has significant pent up demand.”

He cited Nile Air’s upcoming route between Luxor and Kuwait as evidence of its ability to react quickly to emerging demand.

However, it was the March 2014 launch of flights from Cairo to Jeddah that marked perhaps the biggest milestone in its recent history. Long restricted to flag-carriers EgyptAir and Saudia, the market was liberalised with a twice-weekly Nile Air service in what Aly described as “genuinely a very big step forward” by the authorities.

“Cairo-Jeddah is the single largest route out of Egypt and the largest origin and destination (O&D) market in the Middle East,” he noted. “The authorities have realised the benefits of encouraging the growth of aviation. They’ve taken proactive steps.”

Aly also cited the 2004 liberalisation of all Egyptian airports outside of Cairo, saying that the move precipitated 580% growth in overall flight operations at Alexandria Airport.

Talks are on-going about the possibility of easing traffic restrictions further in Cairo, as well as permitting self-handling for ground services by private carriers.

“The pace [of reform] has been slower than in other countries in the region, but we’ve seen positive developments,” Aly concluded. “We hope it continues. I think it will be to the benefit of the economy of Egypt.”



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PICTURE: COI

# Une vague de changement dans l'océan indien?

«The tide is changing in the Indian Ocean» – Page 40

*La Commission de l'océan Indien vient de publier son plaidoyer pour une stratégie aérienne intégrée dans la région. La connectivité aérienne régionale représente de véritables opportunités de développement en Afrique et dans le monde. Vincent Chappard revient sur les propositions concrètes de ce rapport qui préconise une approche coordonnée du transport aérien.*

**L**e rapport « Les ailes de l'Indianocéanie » s'inscrit dans la suite logique de la conférence sur les enjeux de la desserte aérienne régionale organisée à l'île Maurice, en mai 2013, par la Commission de l'océan Indien (COI).

« Cette conférence a été une prise de conscience collective de la réalité des difficultés et de l'ampleur des problèmes. Elle a également fait émerger que les intérêts nationaux étaient parfois en contradiction avec ceux des compagnies aériennes », déclare Jean-Claude de l'Estrac, secrétaire général de la COI.

Cette question de la connectivité aérienne impacte tous les aspects de la société indianocéanique que ce soit l'économie, le commerce, l'éducation, la santé ou encore la culture.

Les compagnies aériennes Air Austral, Air Madagascar, Air Mauritius et Air Seychelles



**Jean-Claude de l'Estrac: «Elle a également fait émerger que les intérêts nationaux étaient parfois en contradiction avec ceux des compagnies aériennes »**

doivent lutter contre les mêmes contraintes d'une offre morcelée et s'adapter à une demande limitée. Elles sont confrontées à une rude concurrence internationale sur les marchés traditionnels de l'Europe et du Moyen-Orient et sur les marchés émergents d'Asie et d'Afrique auxquels elles s'intéressent depuis peu.

Les maux dont souffre la connectivité aérienne au sein des pays de la COI ont été clairement identifiés dans ce rapport. Dans son étude datant de juillet 2013 sur l'océan Indien, la Banque Mondiale pointe du doigt l'étroitesse des routes aériennes régionales de même que les fréquences. Elle souligne également le coût exorbitant des vols intra-régionaux. Ils sont 613 % plus chers que les vols intra-européens et 182 % plus chers que les vols intra-caribéens. La question des taxes demeure un réel problème. Elles comptent pour 35 à 51 % du prix d'un billet d'avion, qu'il soit intra-

Continuer à  
la page 40

SUITE DE LA PAGE 39

régional ou intercontinental. Le rapport « Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2013 » a recensé le niveau des taxes dans 140 pays. Le Swaziland se trouve à la première place (la plus vertueuse) et le Tchad à la dernière place.

Entre ces deux extrêmes, Madagascar occupe la 83ème place, l'île Maurice la 88ème et les Seychelles la 89ème.

Ce niveau excessivement élevé des prix est dû principalement à l'échec de la mise en œuvre des politiques de libéralisation du transport aérien, les lacunes dans la gestion des compagnies nationales, le protectionnisme, le haut niveau des taxes, le coût élevé des services aéroportuaires ou encore la structure des prix qui décourage les déplacements régionaux. Ce sont malheureusement des phénomènes bien connus sur le continent africain.

Les états membres de la COI sont donc face à de grands défis liés à la connectivité aérienne en Indianocéanie.

« Il y a une prise de conscience de la nécessité de chercher de nouveaux modèles mais j'ai l'impression que chacun est en train de chercher la solution dans son coin alors que notre appel est de mieux coordonner et harmoniser les positions », souligne Jean-Claude de L'Estrac.



C'est pour cette raison que le 29ème conseil de la COI a validé en avril dernier l'organisation d'une réunion des ministres des Transports et du Tourisme incluant les compagnies aériennes, l'aviation civile et les opérateurs du tourisme. Cette réunion se tenait aux Seychelles, le 08 juillet 2014, au moment où le magazine allait sous presse. Selon Jean-Claude de l'Estrac, c'est déjà une avancée considérable - voire une première - de réunir ensemble les ministres de l'aviation civile et du tourisme de la COI.

Les participants à cette conférence ont débattu sur des solutions proposées dans le rapport. La proposition principale émane des Seychelles. Le pays propose la mise en place d'un marché unique du transport aérien dans l'Indianocéanie appelé IOSAM (voir encadré).

« Les ailes de l'Indianocéanie » préconisent également une démarche en trois étapes pour répondre aux défis du transport aérien régional. La

**« Il y a une prise de conscience de la nécessité de chercher de nouveaux modèles. »**  
Jean-Claude L'Estrac

première est davantage commerciale avec la mise en place d'un « Air Pass » de l'océan Indien avec des offres compétitives. Ces billets seraient intégrés dans le système global de distribution et permettraient, selon les experts de la Banque mondiale, de faire sauter un « goulot d'étranglement significatif ». La seconde est la remise à plat des accords bilatéraux entre les pays de la COI. Il n'existe pas par exemple de vols entre les Seychelles et Madagascar et il y a peu de fréquences entre Maurice et les Seychelles.

A plus long terme, l'Institution de Bretton Woods et de nombreuses voix soulignent l'intérêt pour la région de disposer d'une compagnie régionale à bas coûts qui donnerait un coup d'accélérateur aux voyages. La compagnie Air Asia en est le plus bel exemple au sein de l'association des nations de l'Asie du Sud-Est (ASEAN).

## Un marché aérien unique (IOSAM) pour la COI

**Les Seychelles proposent de travailler à un accord-cadre pour la mise en place d'un marché unique de l'aérien appelé IOSAM (Indian Ocean Single Aviation Market) entre les pays membres de la COI. Ce terme évoque le « marché intérieur » européen dans lequel les biens, les services, les capitaux et les personnes, circulent librement. La région serait alors pleinement accessible, à la croisée des routes d'Europe, d'Asie, du Moyen-Orient et d'Afrique.**

**L'IOSAM puise sa pertinence dans le cadre juridique de l'ASEAN. Il repose sur deux projets d'accord multilatéral relatif aux passagers et au fret. Sa mise en œuvre progressive pourrait conduire à terme à l'établissement d'un « ciel ouvert » régional. C'est ce cadre général qui pourrait être adopté par les États membres de la COI.**

## SUMMARY

# The tide is changing in the Indian Ocean

**A summit meeting looking at proposals to open up air transport in the Indian Ocean was taking place in the Seychelles as African Aerospace was going to press.**

**The meeting, on July 8, was due to feature ministers of transport and tourism, airline officials, tourism operators and civil aviation representatives.**

**Jean-Claude Estrac, general secretary of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), which was coordinating the meeting, described it as a huge step forward – even a first – to bring together the ministers of the various countries represented by the IOC.**

**The summit followed the IOC's publication of a report into an integrated air strategy for the region – a follow-up action to its May 2013 meeting in Mauritius.**

**“There is a collective awareness of the reality of the difficulties and the magnitude of the problems,” said Estrac. “It is clear that national interests are sometimes at odds with those of the airlines in the region.”**

**In its July 2013 study from the Indian Ocean, the World Bank pointed to the narrowness of regional air routes as well as frequencies. It also highlighted**

**the exorbitant cost of intra-regional flights. They are 613% more expensive than the most expensive intra-Caribbean flights and 182% higher than intra-European flights.**

**Local tax issues remain a real problem, accounting for between 35 and 51% of the price of a ticket.**

**The IOC report said air connectivity had an impact on all aspects of society in the Indian Ocean, whether the economy, trade, education, health or culture. Airlines like Air Austral, Air Madagascar, Air Mauritius and Air Seychelles were constrained and facing stiff international competition in the traditional markets of Europe and the Middle East, as well as emerging markets in Asia and Africa.**

**Radical solutions being discussed at the summit meeting include a Seychelles proposal for the establishment of a single market for air transport in the Indian Ocean and an IOC idea to create an ‘air pass’ for the region.**

**IOC was also advocating the overhaul of bilateral agreements between the countries that it represented.**

**The creation of a low-cost carrier (LCC) for the region was also being considered.**

Le transport aérien dans l'océan Indien semble se trouver dans une zone de turbulences et désormais l'inaction pourrait mener à la paralysie. « Dans le secteur aérien, il y a beaucoup trop d'acteurs. La consolidation va se poursuivre, elle est nécessaire », écrivait en 2010, Didier Bréchemier, spécialiste du secteur. Cela est d'autant plus parlant que les compagnies aériennes de la région connaissent une situation financière précaire, malgré quelques embellies épisodiques.

Les exemples des nouveaux modèles du transport aérien régional que l'on voit en Europe ou en Asie montrent clairement que la meilleure solution reste celle de la libéralisation, de l'ouverture du ciel, des ententes entre les gouvernements et de la nécessité d'une approche coordonnée comme on le constate à Singapour entre le secteur privé, le tourisme et les compagnies aériennes.

Ces synergies sont prometteuses et une meilleure connectivité aérienne contribue à la croissance, à l'économie, à l'emploi partout dans le monde, en particulier en Afrique. Selon l'IATA, un accroissement de 10 % de la connectivité aérienne entraîne sur le long terme une hausse de 0,07 % de la croissance annuelle. Mais avant d'en arriver là, il faudra, selon Jean-Claude de l'Estrac, convaincre les gouvernements des pays membres de la COI et voir aboutir un certain nombre de décisions précises et concrètes.

Car le prix de l'inaction risque d'être beaucoup plus élevé que celui de l'action.

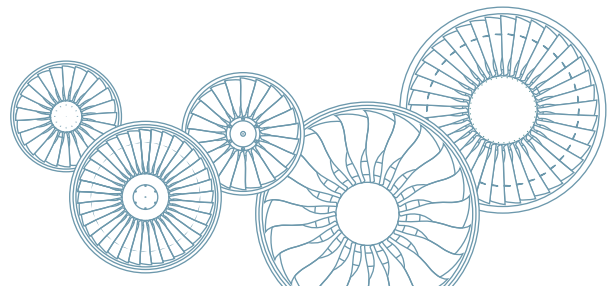


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*After a lengthy legal battle, Safair has finally won permission to launch its domestic subsidiary – FlySafair.*

**Tom Pleasant** spoke to the Johannesburg-based company about the pending launch.

# SAFAIR SO GOOD

According to Lorna Terblanche, vice president of passenger services for the low-cost carrier (LCC), the operator plans to start flying before the end of 2014, operating between Johannesburg and Cape Town.

“In the fleet at the moment we have two 165-seater Boeing 737-400s and a back-up 147-seater 737-300,” she said. “We own two of those outright and lease the third.”

The route is a highly prized one, made more so by the recent collapse of fellow South African LCCs, 1time and Velvet Sky.

Comair and SAA, and their low-cost divisions, kulula.com and Mango, are now the only carriers flying the route – a fact that has boosted their profits significantly thanks to sharply hiked air fares, much to the public and media’s displeasure.

The Air Services Licensing Council initially granted FlySafair its licence so that it could start operations on October 17 2013 and muscle in on that action. However, following a petition from Comair, the North Gauteng High Court issued FlySafair with an interim interdict blocking its launch. Founders of 1time, Glenn Orsmond and Rodney James, and Johan Borstlap, ex-managing director of Sun Air, had planned to launch another LCC, Skywise, on the same route just before Christmas and so joined Comair in

**The operator plans to start flying before the end of 2014, operating between Johannesburg and Cape Town.**

lodging the legal proceedings.

Their objection was based on FlySafair not being 75% South African-owned, a national requirement.

While Hugh Flynn, one of FlySafair’s three controlling shareholders, was born and brought up in South Africa, he had subsequently moved to Ireland, where he continues to be the CEO of ASL Aviation Group, the parent company of Air Contractors.

He has dual Irish and South African nationality, but is not an ‘ordinary’ resident of South Africa.

To address the legal requirement, Safair shifted Flynn’s shares into what FlySafair CEO Dave Andrew said is the largest aviation-industry employee-share scheme in South Africa. The scheme effectively gives the LCC’s employees a 25.14% stake in the company, and now means it meets the 75% shares threshold.



“With this reapplication, the Air Services Licensing Council was obviously a lot more diligent reviewing our new documentation,” said Terblanche. “They had all their legal teams go over it too, and now they are completely happy that all the terms and conditions have been met.

“We feel very confident that everything has

been agreed and we can start flying. But, first, we need to go back and make sure all our suppliers are on board and that all the operational requirements are absolutely ready. After the last time, we don’t want to promise something that never comes to fruition.”

Despite, the setback and all the additional work needed to resubmit the licence application, Terblanche is surprisingly understanding about the rival airlines’ actions.

“Yes, the local industry has been very protectionist, but it’s all about business,” she said. “There’s really only room for one more domestic carrier and, unsurprisingly, Skywise wanted to be it, while Comair’s complaints were based on them not wanting us to take away their huge profits. They used to make about 40 Rand (US\$3.75) per passenger. Now, following 1time and Velvet Sky’s leaving the market, it is substantially more than that. A lot of that is due to the exchange rate and price of fuel, but they are still making a lot of money. After all, in the airline industry, it’s all a volumes game.

“They are there to protect their business and their markets. We would all do the same in the similar situation. That’s capitalism. That’s how you make money.”

Safair has been an air operator in South Africa for more than 40 years, but only on non-scheduled charters, usually flying Hercules L100-30s carrying food aid for the United Nations.

As well as Terblanche, a chartered accountant by profession, who was once Safair’s financial



**“Aviation is a lot harder than people think it is and local markets have their own quirks.”**

**LORNA TERBLANCHE**

director, FlySafair will also have Dave Andrews, CEO, and Wimpie Davidson, technical director, joining the airline from its parent company. Both started their careers at South African Airlines before moving to Safair in the early 1990s.

Their joint experience and Safair’s long history is why Terblanche is confident FlySafair will be a success in the long term.

“Everyone wants to either start flying or launch an airline here because, with the continent developing so much, there’s a lot of money to be made,” she said.

“But, as we all know, aviation is a lot harder than people think it is and local markets have their own quirks. In Africa, especially, it pays to

have local knowledge.

“The reason [FlySafair] is going to work is because it won’t be a brand new business. It will be a division of Safair and that already has all the necessary commercial and operational infrastructure in place.

“That also means we will be able to scale up quickly, due to that being our prior expertise on charters.”

Terblanche said FlySafair has certainly learned valuable lessons during the whole reapplication process.

“We should definitely have been more aggressive about it when launching,” she said. “The thing about Andrew and Wimpie is that they’re proper gentlemen, which is nice, but

when you’re dealing with your competitors you have to be ruthless.”

She was also frustrated at the lack of understanding of the aviation industry within the regulatory process. This meant the “legal guys are just making a lot of money from all of us”, she pointed out.

“Trying to explain things to the various departments and making sure there were people there who understood the industry was difficult but, just as we’ve learned a lot, so has the regulator, which is to the benefit of everybody else in the industry.”

Now, though, Terblanche has to renegotiate some contracts and ensure the airline’s suppliers are ready for the new launch date.

That date will remain secret, however, as she is determined not to announce it until the new airline is absolutely ready to start flying.



*Corsair International, filiale du leader mondial des voyages et du tourisme TUI, a annoncé une extension de son partenariat avec Emirates lors d'une conférence de presse à l'aéroport Roland Garros de l'île de La Réunion.*

**Vincent Chappard** a rencontré **Pascal de Izaguirre**, président directeur général de TUI France, pour faire le point sur la stratégie de la compagnie aérienne, son récent positionnement en Afrique ainsi que ses partenariats.

# Corsair avance, étape par étape

**C**orsair International est une compagnie aérienne régulière de premier plan sur le long courrier. Elle opère depuis Paris des vols vers 4 zones géographiques : l'Amérique du nord, Les Caraïbes, l'océan Indien et depuis 2013, l'Afrique.

Corsair International a ouvert en 2013 une route vers Dakar sur la base d'une fréquence quotidienne. La compagnie a signé un partenariat avec Senegal Airlines pour desservir les principales destinations de la région. La compagnie relie également Abidjan à raison de trois vols par semaine. Air Côte d'Ivoire est son partenaire régional.

« Notre positionnement marketing est extrêmement clair. Il consiste à offrir le meilleur rapport qualité prix à nos clients », rappelle Pascal de Izaguirre, président-directeur général de TUI France. « Nous veillons également à être toujours très offensif et compétitif sur les prix par rapport à nos concurrents. »

Un an après son arrivée sur le marché ivoirien, Corsair a annoncé en avril dernier avoir stimulé le trafic passagers de 30% et induit une forte baisse du prix des billets d'avion de l'ordre de 20%. Les perspectives de développement sont également encourageantes ce qui a poussé Air France à opérer cette route avec un A380.

Corsair International dispose également d'un solide réseau dans l'océan Indien. Elle opère un vol quotidien vers l'île de la Réunion. Elle dessert également Madagascar via Mayotte avec trois vols hebdomadaires. La compagnie relie l'île Maurice trois fois par semaine.

Lors de la conférence de presse, Pascal de Izaguirre a annoncé l'extension de l'accord avec Emirates signé en novembre 2013. Celui-ci s'étend désormais à l'ensemble de l'océan Indien. Le renforcement de cet accord permet à Corsair International d'avoir une complémentarité entre son réseau et ses dessertes.

« La première partie de l'accord du partenariat avec Emirates concernait nos routes sur Abidjan et Dakar. Elle permet à notre clientèle africaine d'avoir



**Corsair opère depuis Paris des vols vers 4 zones géographiques : l'Amérique du nord, Les Caraïbes, l'océan Indien et depuis 2013, l'Afrique.**

## TUI, un acteur majeur du tourisme et du transport aérien

**TUI est un groupe international, leader dans le secteur du tourisme. Il compte plus de 30 millions de clients répartis dans plus de 31 marchés. Il offre également à ses clients un large éventail de formats à travers ses 3500 agences de voyages.**

**Outre l'aspect touristique, TUI Travel est un acteur majeur dans le domaine du transport aérien. Elle dispose d'une flotte de 146 avions et un important réseau en Afrique. Le groupe possède en effet de nombreuses compagnies aériennes en Europe pour ses activités comme TUIfly (Allemagne), Jetairfly (Belgique), CanJet (Canada), Corsair International (France), Arkefly (Pays-Bas), Thomson Airways (Royaume-Uni), TUIfly Nordic (Suède). Seule Corsair International opère pleinement comme un transporteur régulier.**

**Selon un porte-parole de TUI Travel, l'objectif du groupe est de proposer des séjours tout compris et une expérience unique à ses clients. Les compagnies aériennes constituent une partie intégrante de cette expérience pour chacun des tours opérateurs de loisirs.**

une continuité à partir de notre base de Paris », a déclaré Pascal Gardin, directeur commercial de Corsair International. « Il y a également une possibilité pour les clients d'Emirates et de Corsair International de mixer des voyages d'affaires sur les axes Dubaï, Dakar/Abidjan et Paris. »

L'extension de l'accord va maintenant permettre aux passagers de Corsair International d'avoir une logique de fréquence quotidienne sur l'île Maurice. La compagnie a également signé un accord commercial avec British Airways et permettant à leurs clients en connexion à Orly de bénéficier de tarifs attractifs. Il est valable à partir de l'ensemble des destinations desservies par Corsair et en particulier l'Afrique et l'Océan indien.

Corsair International a en effet mis en œuvre une stratégie de montée en gamme et de reconquête depuis 2010. Elle semble portée ses fruits aujourd'hui.

Cette stratégie a également le renforcement de la classe affaires. Celle-ci a vu son chiffre d'affaires augmenter de 50% en 2013. Le taux de remplissage de la compagnie affichait un taux de remplissage de 87% l'année dernière. La compagnie a beaucoup investi dans l'amélioration du confort de ses cabines. Elle opère désormais avec une flotte entièrement renouvelée sur



l'ensemble de son réseau. Celle-ci est composée désormais de 3 B747-400, deux A330-300 mais également de deux A330-300 de dernière génération. Le résultat opérationnel de l'exercice 2012/2013 est désormais proche de l'équilibre, s'élevant à 1,2 million d'euros en 2013 contre 18 millions d'euros en 2012. L'objectif est de revenir durablement à l'équilibre en 2014.

Selon Pascal de Izaguirre, Corsair International cherche à avoir une part de marché significative sur les lignes de son réseau. L'important c'est de rester agressif sur les prix et de réduire les coûts. Pour avoir un « yield » optimum, il est nécessaire d'offrir le meilleur rapport qualité - prix à ses clients et d'avoir un bon « mix » entre la classe économique, la classe affaires mais aussi le fret et les revenus additionnels. Il est important de souligner que le fret joue également un rôle important sur la rentabilité d'une route et particulièrement pour Corsair International. La compagnie a d'ailleurs intensifié son offre de fret sur le Sénégal et en particulier dans le secteur de la pêche.

Sur le marché réunionnais, Pascal de Izaguirre aime à rappeler que Corsair International est la seule compagnie à progresser en nombre de passagers sur l'axe Paris-La Réunion. Ce marché

est stratégique pour la compagnie, il a représenté 17% de son chiffre d'affaires en 2013. Le marché réunionnais depuis Paris reste toutefois difficile et saturé avec la présence d'Air France et Air Austral.

Corsair International est désormais en ordre de marche pour aborder les prochaines étapes de son développement. Ses fondamentaux sont aujourd'hui extrêmement solides pour aborder l'avenir. Selon Pascal de Izaguirre, l'année 2014 est une année décisive pour le renouvellement de sa flotte prévue en 2017. Corsair International a décidé de sortir de sa flotte ses Boeing 747 à l'horizon 2016/2017. C'est un chantier stratégique.

Avant d'ouvrir de nouvelles routes et en particulier en Afrique, Corsair International souhaite nouer de nouveaux partenariats qui lui permettront d'alimenter son réseau et développer des synergies avec d'autres compagnies. Des annonces seront faites dans les prochains mois. Il est également question d'ouvrir le capital pour accueillir un partenaire stratégique. Mais comme le dit justement Pascal de Izaguirre, « Chi va piano va sano\* ».

■ *Proverbe italien qui signifie qu'il vaut mieux partir lentement et atteindre son but, plutôt que de se précipiter et prendre le risque d'aller tout droit à l'échec.*

## SUMMARY

### Corsair expands Emirates agreement

Corsair International, a subsidiary of leading travel and tourism company TUI, is extending its partnership with Emirates to encompass the Indian Ocean.

The French carrier initially signed an interline agreement with Emirates in November last year that offered Senegalese travellers seamless connections to Paris.

Under that agreement, customers were able to purchase joint Emirates-Corsair itineraries, providing them more convenience when connecting between Paris and west Africa.

Corsair International chose Roland Garros Airport, on the Indian Ocean island of Réunion, to make the latest announcement. The airline has a strong network in the Indian Ocean, operating a daily flight to Réunion, serving Madagascar (via Mayotte) with three weekly flights, and connecting to Mauritius three times a week.

Pascal de Izaguirre, CEO of TUI France, said strengthening the interline agreement allowed Corsair International to complement its network and routes.

The company has also signed a commercial agreement with British Airways allowing its customers access to Orly Airport at attractive rates. It is valid from all destinations served by Corsair and, particularly, Africa and the Indian Ocean.

Established in 1981, Corsair International is the second largest French airline and operates a fleet of seven long-haul aircraft. The carrier currently operates international scheduled services to destinations in the French overseas territories in the Caribbean and Indian Ocean, as well as to west Africa and North America.

Its fleet now consists of three B747-400s, two A330-300s and two next generation A330-300s.

According to de Izaguirre, Corsair International is the only company growing passenger numbers on the Paris-Reunion axis. This market is strategic for the company; it accounted for 17% of its turnover in 2013.

However, it remains difficult and is saturated with the presence of Air France and Air Austral.

The CEO added that, before opening new routes – and particularly in Africa – Corsair aimed to forge new partnerships that would enable it to supply its network and develop synergies with other companies.

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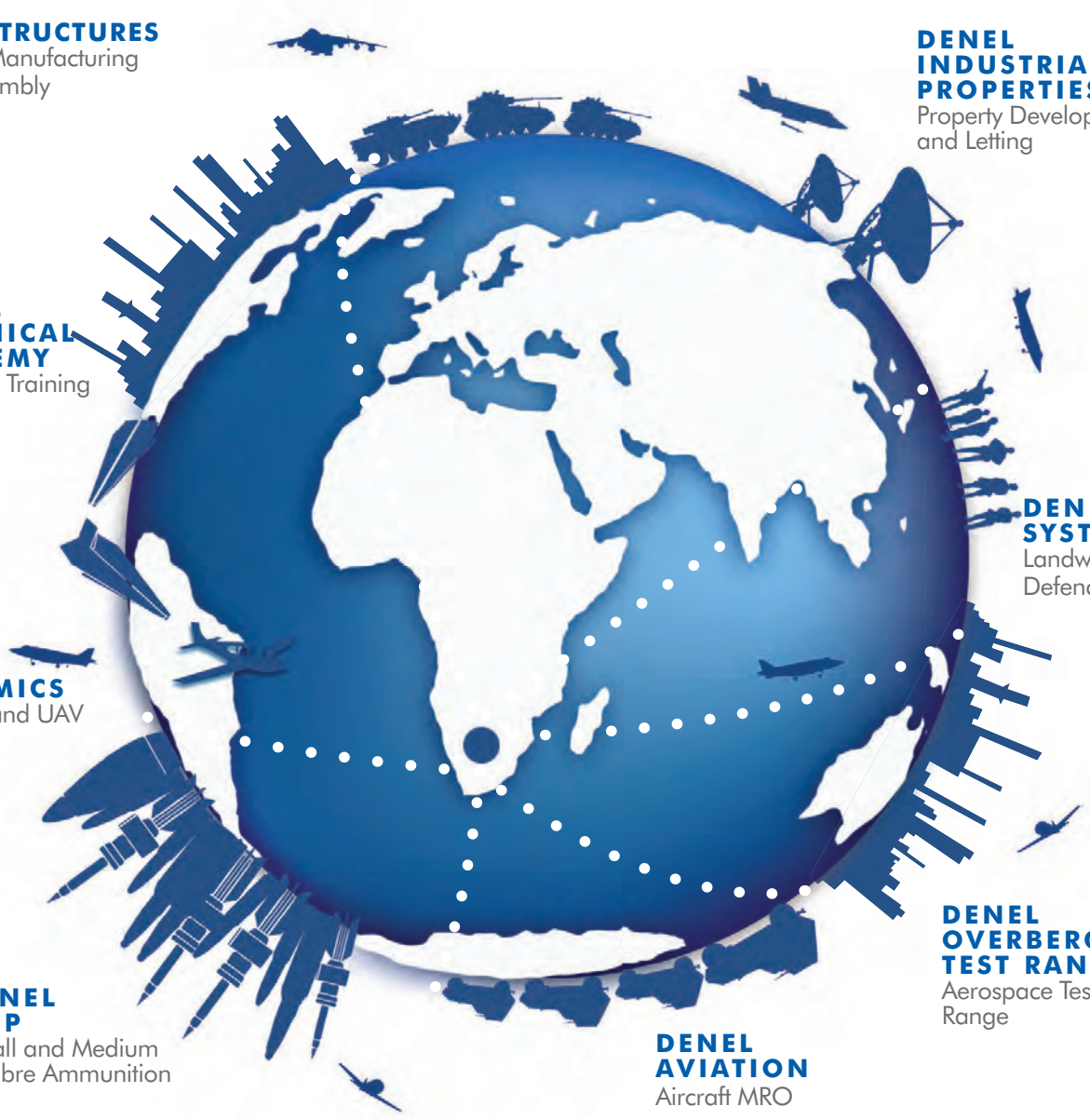
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*The South African Air Force has operated many types of aircraft over the years but is now led by its Saab Gripen fleet, allowing it to maintain air superiority in the region. Jon Lake reports.*

The Denel Rooivalk ("Red Hawk") helicopter represents the SAAF's no-nonsense approach.



# Ups and downs of the SAAF

**T**he South African Air Force (SAAF) was formed in 1920 with an 'imperial gift' of about 100 aircraft from the United Kingdom to South Africa – then one of the British Empire's dominions.

The new air arm was laid down along British lines and links with the RAF were important for many years.

At its peak, in the apartheid era SAAF had nine fast jet fighter/fighter-bomber squadrons, two bomber squadrons, two maritime patrol squadrons, seven helicopter squadrons, five transport squadrons, and three army co-operation squadrons. It also had an air defence artillery group of 11 short to medium range (SAM) and anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) squadrons, and about a dozen 'territorial reserve' squadrons operating private aircraft.

This made it bigger than some European air arms, and the force was combat-proven thanks to the long-running 'border war' in south-west Africa (Namibia), Angola, Zambia and Rhodesia.

Though it became increasingly isolated during the apartheid era, the SAAF had a long history of cooperation with first world air forces, fighting alongside the Allies in the First and Second World Wars, participating in the Berlin Airlift and playing a significant role in the Korean War.

Despite an international arms embargo, the SAAF was able to modernise, collaborating with Israel to design, develop and deliver the Atlas Cheetah

fighter, as well as indigenously developing the Oryx helicopter as an advanced derivative of the Puma, and the Rooivalk attack helicopter.

The SAAF even had a nuclear strike capability, with six 10-18 kT bombs for carriage by the Canberra or Buccaneer, though South Africa later unilaterally disarmed, dismantling and decommissioning the weapons.

South Africa stopped providing active support to the white regime in Rhodesia from 1976, instead working together with the USA to place pressure on Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith to agree to a form of black majority rule.

The war in Namibia ended with the signature of the New York Accords on December 22 1988, which also saw Cuban and South African forces withdrawing from Angola, effectively ending the long-running border war.

From 1989, SAAF operational strength was progressively reduced in the face of the perceived reduction in the external threat. Seven squadrons were disbanded, and older aircraft types, such as the Canberra and Buccaneer bombers, the P-166 Albatross coastal patrol aircraft, the Super Frelon and Westland Wasp helicopters, and the Kudu army cooperation aircraft, were retired.

A number of bases were closed or scaled down, including Pietersburg, Port Elizabeth and Potchefstroom.

After the elections in 1994 the former homelands

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(‘thuislanden’) became part of South Africa and the aircraft of the defence forces of Bophuthatswana, Ciskei and Venda were added to the SAAF inventory, though some of these were subsequently sold on or retired after brief service.

A rationalisation of the SAAF resulted in a slimming down of the fast jet force to three single squadrons operating the Dassault Mirage F1AZ, the Atlas Cheetah C, and the Impala Mk II, and a Combat Flying School using the Impala Mk I.

The Cheetah E-equipped No5 Squadron had been disbanded at AFB Louis Trichardt during 1992 after only four years in service.

Even this, however, was not sufficient to meet South Africa’s budgetary requirements, with its urgent social spending priorities, and in 1995 a new Defence White Paper laid the ground for a further round of spending cuts.

The decision was taken to reduce the SAAF fighter fleet to a single squadron of 28 aircraft, supported by about 24 lead-in fighter trainer aircraft – representing a reduction of about 66%.

Accordingly, No1 Squadron disbanded at Hoedspruit on November 25 1997, and its Mirage F1AZ attack aircraft were retired, while No8 Squadron at Hoedspruit was disbanded on March 31 2001, when the Impala was finally retired from frontline service.



The frontline unit that escaped the axe was No2 Squadron – the ‘Cheetahs’ – which had reactivated with Cheetah C and Cheetah D aircraft at AFB Louis Trichardt in 1993, having absorbed the Cheetah training unit, No89 Combat Flying School.

The Cheetah C was the ultimate development of the Cheetah series, and while previous versions (the two-seat Cheetah D and interim Cheetah E) were mainly converted to virtual Kfir C7/TC-7 standards from existing SAAF Mirage IIID2Z and IIIEZ airframes by IAI, the 38 Cheetah Cs were converted from Israeli Kfir C2 airframes, which were re-engined with Snecma ATAR 9K-50C-11 engines and upgraded to Kfir 2000 standards.

The engines were sourced from Israel, Morocco and perhaps from South Africa’s retiring Mirage F1CZs. They were fitted with more sophisticated avionics and navigation systems, a new wide-angle HUD, improved HOTAS controls, an advanced EW suite, and a new pulse-Doppler, Elbit EL/M-2032 multi-mode radar, as well as a helmet mounted sighting system.

The Cheetah C was a true multi-role fighter, armed with V4 R-Darter beyond-visual-range (BVR) radar-guided missiles, and U-Darter short-range infrared (IR)-homing missiles. It was capable of carrying a range of precision-guided munitions.

The Cheetah C even took on reconnaissance missions, carrying a W Vinten Ltd reconnaissance pod under the centreline.

But, while the Cheetah C was impressive, the procurement of Sukhoi Su-27s by Angola meant that the SAAF’s traditional superiority in the air was



South Africa took delivery of four Super Lynx 300 maritime helicopters in 2007.

threatened, and there was a real likelihood that other African nations would acquire similarly advanced fighters. Moreover the Cheetah C was a multi-role aircraft, capable of carrying out air-to-air, air-to-ground or reconnaissance missions, but was not a swing-role fighter, and thus could not do all three during the course of a single mission. Furthermore, the Cheetah C was less efficient and cost-effective than a more modern swing-role fighter would be.

The decision was taken to issue tenders for a new generation fighter and an appropriate fighter trainer.

In November 1998 it was announced that the SAAF would acquire Saab Gripen new generation fighter aircraft, to meet its advanced light fighter aircraft (ALFA) requirement. South Africa signed a contract with BAE/Saab for the procurement of 26 Gripens (C/D standard) in 1999.

As part of the same new defence equipment package, the South African Government also signed a contract for 24 BAE Hawk Mk 120 lead-in fighter trainer (LIFT) aircraft, under Project Winchester. The first BAe-built Hawk Mk 120 was delivered to the SAAF’s Test Flight Development Centre at Overberg in November 2003 for evaluation.

To train its Gripen pilots, the SAAF re-equipped No85 Combat Flying School with the new BAE Hawk Mk 120s, the first of which had arrived at the unit on September 9 2005.

The school – 85CFS (Impala) – finally ceased operations on November 30, after which all training was on the Hawk, and using state-of-the-art computer-aided flight training systems in a new purpose-built facility shared with the SAAF Gripen force.

An initial course of Hawk ground crew completed training in July 2005, while an initial cadre of instructor aircrew began conversion training in September 2005 and graduated on December 8 2005.

With the exception of South Africa’s initial Hawk (SA 250) flight test and development aircraft, which was built in the United Kingdom, all of the SAAF Hawks were assembled at Denel’s aircraft factory at Johannesburg International Airport in Kempton Park, near Johannesburg.

Under the terms of the industrial participation agreement, Denel manufactured tailplanes, airbrakes and flaps for the Hawk programme.

The Hawk has a weapons training role and No89 CFS has participated in the annual South Africa National Defence Force preparation exercises, firing live cannon rounds and dropping live bombs. They also had a successful weapons deployment exercise to AFB Bloemfontein in 2007.

The Hawks have a wartime reserve role, although it has been publicly stated that the school will not be used operationally except in the case of a very urgent operational need.

The original Gripen order was for 19 single-seat and nine two-seat aircraft, though the order was revised to 17 single-seaters (and nine two-seaters) in 2005.

South Africa’s first Gripen, SA01, a fully-instrumented two-seat Gripen D, rolled-off the Saab assembly line in October 2005 and made its maiden flight in Sweden on November 11. The aircraft made its South African public debut on September 19 2006, on the eve of the African Aerospace & Defence (AAD) 2006 exhibition held at Ysterplaat AFB in Cape Town.



The aircraft was used for the integration and development of South African avionics, weapons and systems, and was destined to remain with the test flight and development centre (TFDC) at Overberg. The SAAF accepted its first Gripen D in April 2008 and the final two Gripen D aircraft arrived in South Africa in July 2009. A computer-based training (CBT) system and two Squadron-level mission trainers were also commissioned.

The Cheetah C was phased out on April 1 2008 pending the introduction of the Gripen, allowing the pilots of No2 Squadron to undergo conversion to the new aircraft, though it subsequently emerged that the Cheetah had been withdrawn four years early due to funding constraints. The initial six SAAF Gripen pilots received their training in Sweden.

The next group of three SAAF pilots (including the SAAF’s first female fighter pilot – Major Catherine ‘Siren’ Labuschagne) underwent training with No85 Combat Flying School at Makhado in late 2010. SAAF Gripen pilots are required to accumulate about 430 hours on the

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Hawk and pass several courses before they can convert to the Gripen.

The first two South African single-seat Gripen C aircraft arrived by ship on February 11 2010, and by the end of the year 15 aircraft had been delivered.

The operational effectiveness of the Gripen force has been severely constrained by budget cuts. It has been reported that SAAF pilots have had difficulty maintaining currency.

In 2010-2011 it was acknowledged that the number of flying hours per Gripen pilot was reduced from 224 to 110 per year, and there have been reports that some were sometimes flying as few as a dozen hours annually, and up to 12 of the aircraft have been mothballed at times – as recently as March 2013, for example, when defence minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula admitted that 12 of the aircraft were in long-term storage “in line with their utilisation and budget expenditure patterns/flow of the SAAF”.



Outside the frontline fast jet element, the remainder of the SAAF underwent a similar process of streamlining and modernisation, with the retirement of obsolete types and a reduction in squadron numbers.

The SAAF's flying training underwent a major change in 1995, with the retirement of the long-serving Harvard, which was replaced by the Pilatus PC-7 Mk II – an aircraft based on the PC-9 but fitted with the lower-powered 700-shp PT6A-25C engine. Fitted with local avionics, the PC-7 Mk II is known locally as the Astra.

From 2010, 35 Astras underwent an avionics replacement programme under project Ithambo, replacing the unsupportable local avionics (whose supplier had gone out of business) with the avionic suite that is fitted to factory-produced Pilatus PC-7 Mk IIs. As a result, the Astra name has been dropped for upgraded aircraft.

The helicopter force escaped the cuts of the 1990s relatively lightly. The ageing Super Frelons of No15 Squadron were retired in 1991, but the unit continued with Pumas and Alouette IIIs, and then, from 1994, with Oryxs and BK117s.

Two Puma squadrons – Nos 30 and 31 – were disbanded on December 31 1991 and December 4 1992.

The obsolete Westland Wasps of No22 Squadron were retired in 1990 but the squadron continued with Alouette IIIs, augmented by Pumas from the disbanding No30 Squadron.

The Puma gave way to the Atlas Oryx in 1994 and the squadron took delivery of four Super Lynx 300 maritime helicopters in 2007. These augmented the squadron's Oryx fleet, and gave a

## South African Air Force Air Order of Battle

<b>AFB Bloemspruit</b>	
The military enclave of Bloemfontein Airport, located to the south east of the runway intersection, with base housing to the south west.	
16 Squadron	11 x Denel Rooivalk
87 Helicopter Flying School	9 x Agusta A109LUH, BK 117, Atlas Oryx
106 Squadron	private light aircraft
107 Squadron	private light aircraft
All 100-series squadrons are Light Transport (Reserve) units, manned by civilian pilots flying their own aircraft.	
<b>AFB Durban</b>	
The military enclave of Durban International Airport, located at the northern end of the runway.	
15 Squadron	Atlas Oryx, Agusta A109LUH, MBB/Kawasaki BK 117
105 Squadron	private light aircraft
<b>AFS Port Elizabeth</b>	
The military enclave of Port Elizabeth Airport, located on the north eastern side of the main runway. Downgraded to air force station status in the early 1990s.	
15 Squadron - C Flight	BK 117 - converted to Agusta A109LUH
108 Squadron	private light aircraft
<b>AFB Hoedspruit</b>	
Opened on July 1 1978, Hoedspruit (on the border of the Kruger National Park, near Mozambique), is a modern fighter base with numerous hardened aircraft shelters.	
19 Squadron SAAF	Atlas Oryx, 5 x Agusta A109LUH
101 Squadron	private light aircraft
<b>AFB Langebaanweg</b>	
The CFS moved from Dunnoter to Langebaanweg in December 1992. Somersveld serves as a relief landing ground.	
Central Flying School	Pilatus PC-7 MkII
Silver Falcons aerobatic team	probably grounded
<b>AFB Makhado (previously AFB Louis Trichardt)</b>	
The SAAF's most northerly air base, situated near the border with Zimbabwe. The base was officially opened on October 3-4 1987 as AFB Louis Trichardt, but changed its name on November 7 2003.	
2 Squadron SAAF	8 x Gripen D, 17 x Gripen C
85 Combat Flying School	23 x BAE Systems Hawk Mk.120
102 Squadron	private light aircraft
<b>AFB Overberg</b>	
TFDC Bredasdorp became operational in 1987, and in 2004 was designated Air Force Base Overberg. Located next to the Armscor Overberg Test Range (OTB) and de Hoop Missile Test Range.	
Test Flight & Development Centre	1x Agusta 109LUH, 1x SAAB Gripen D, 2x Cheetah D, 1x BAe Hawk Mk.120, 1x Atlas Oryx
<b>AFB Waterkloof</b>	
AFB Waterkloof includes the airports at Waterkloof and Swartkop, which is currently an air force station, though a return to full base status is expected.	
(based at AFB Waterkloof)	
21 Squadron SAAF*	Boeing BB, Cessna Citation II, Falcon 50, Falcon 900
28 Squadron SAAF	Lockheed C-130BZ Hercules
41 Squadron SAAF**	Cessna 208, Pilatus PC-12, Beechcraft 200C King Air
44 Squadron SAAF	CASA C-212 Aviocar, CASA CN-235
60 Squadron SAAF***	acquisition of Airbus A400Ms cancelled Nov 2009
104 Squadron	private light aircraft
111 Squadron	private light aircraft
JARIC	Joint Air Reconnaissance Intelligence Centre
(based at AFS Swartkop)	
SAAF Museum Historic Flight	
17 Squadron SAAF	Atlas Oryx, 4 x Agusta A109LUH
*VIP Transport	
**Light Transport/Air Transport School	
***Transport/Aerial refuelling/EW/ELINT	
<b>AFB Ysterplaat</b>	
Ysterplaat, in Cape Town, is the SAAF's smallest base, with the shortest runways. There have been frequent closure threats.	
22 Squadron SAAF	Atlas Oryx, 4 x Westland Super Lynx 300
35 Squadron SAAF	C-47TP Dakota
80 Air Navigation School	borrowing C-47TP, Cessna Caravan and PC-7 II
110 Squadron	private light aircraft



The Oryx was produced in several versions, including an electronic warfare (stand-off communications jamming/radar jamming) version, equipped with various systems, including a Grinaker Systems Technologies GSY 1501 jamming system.

Two Oryx Mk 2s were built with upgraded de-icing equipment for use by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, as part of the South African National Antarctic programme. They were operated by No22 Squadron. Another 35 Oryxs have been upgraded with airframe life extension modifications and some avionics improvements.

The SAAF has also acquired a number of new helicopter types. Nine MBB BK117s were inherited from the apartheid-era 'homelands' – three from Ciskei, two from Venda, two from Transkei and two from Bophuthatswana – and further examples were then acquired directly by the SAAF.

The first Denel Rooivalk attack helicopter (an indigenously designed and developed tandem seat helicopter gunship based on Super Puma dynamics systems) was delivered to 16 Squadron at Bloemspruit in 1999.

Thirty Agusta A109LUHs were acquired under project Flange and these were delivered from 2003. An option for 10 more exists.

The transport force saw the disbandment of the Dakota-equipped No25 Squadron in October 1990, while No44 Squadron retired its Viscount in 1991, and its DC-4 Skymasters in 1994.

Its C-47TP TurboDaks were transferred to No35 Squadron in 1998, and were replaced by the CASA 212s and CN-235 of the disbanded No86 Multi-Engine Flying School (MEFS). These formed the squadron's A-flight, while B-flight formed in February 2000 to operate the Cessna 185s of the disbanding No42 Squadron.

No28 Squadron retired its C-160Z Transalls in 1993, but augmented its seven ageing C-130B Hercules with three ex-USN C-130F aircraft in 1996, and two ex-USAF C-130Bs were added in 1998. The F models were soon retired, but the nine C-130Bs serve on, all of them upgraded to C-130BZ configuration by Marshall Aerospace and by Denel.

The SAAF has a long-standing requirement for a large, long-range strategic transport capable of carrying an Oryx and/or Rooivalk helicopter to remote locations. South Africa pulled out of the A400 programme, but still needs a strategic airlift aircraft, though for the time being leased Ilyushin Il-76s are being used.

ship-borne helicopter capability missing since the demise of the Wasp.

The Lynxes are frequently operated from the SA Navy's Meko A200SAN class frigates, and wear Navy titles, though they are operated by the air force, with SAAF crews.

The Oryx is a locally upgraded and remanufactured version of the Aérospatiale Puma, equivalent to the Eurocopter Super Puma, offering improved performance and lower operating costs. It uses the basic airframe of the original SA330J Puma, but makes extensive use of locally produced carbon-composite materials, including a redesigned tailboom.

The official story was that the Oryx was 100% indigenous, but it later transpired that the Makila 1a turboshaft engines were acquired via Portugal (with South Africa paying for a Portuguese Puma upgrade, which was supplied in 'kit' form), while Romania's IAR supplied 50 Puma airframes without tailbooms for the Oryx programme. The type was in service by 1991.



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# SAAB



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Morocco now has five Bombardier CL415 waterbombers to fight wildfires. Right: Some of the RMAF's 20 upgraded F-5E Tigers refuel from a Lockheed Hercules C-130; and below that is one of nine of the RMAF's 22 AlphaJets that have been upgraded to LIFT standard.

# Thoroughly modern

**Alan Warnes** *visits the Marrakech Airshow and analyses changes for the north African defence market.*

**W**ith some 30 military aircraft exhibited at this year's biennial Marrakech Airshow, there was plenty to see.

The event, which took place from April 23-26, provided an opportunity to witness the recent modernisation of the Forces Royales Air Marocaines (RMAF, Royal Moroccan Air Force) and view the areas that still need to be addressed.

Undoubtedly, the RMAF is extremely proud of its new F-16s – proving a third world country can operate the latest generation of fighters.

There were two F-16C Block 52s in the static display, parked next to the RMAF's exhibition hangar. One was fitted with conformal fuel tanks. This appears to be a standard fit given that the three to four F-16s that formed part of the RMAF flypasts were in this configuration.

While none of the aircraft wore unit markings, which is in line with RMAF policy, there was a mix of personnel from all three F-16 units Escadrille de Chasse (EDC - Fighter Squadron) – Falcon, Viper and Spark.

The F-16s serve with the 6 BAFRA at Ben Guerir, which was officially opened on July 27, 2009 after many years of renovation.

Evidence in one of the hangar displays confirms the RMAF is also acquiring next generation Raytheon AIM-9X Sidewinders, along with the joint helmet-mounted cueing

system (JHMCS) for its premier fighter.

Two weeks before the show Cubic Defense Systems announced it had won a contract, worth more than \$5 million, from the US Air Force to supply Morocco (one of the United States' allies) with its P5 combat training system (P5CTS). This will allow high-fidelity 'Top Gun-style' live and post-mission training for the F-16C/D pilots.

Standing next to the F-16Cs was a single upgraded Mirage F1EM-VI – one of 27 Mirage F1s being upgraded with kits made by SABCA of Belgium.

The Moroccan upgrade was designed by the Association Sagem Thales pour la Rénovation d'Avions de Combat (ASTRAC) consortium, a joint venture between Thales and Sagem Défense Sécurité (SAFRAN).

SABCA has been subcontracted to integrate the new systems, which include a new Thales RC400 (RDY-3) multi-mode Doppler radar based on the Mirage 2000-5 RDY radar, albeit with a smaller antennae giving shorter range.

The cockpit has been transformed with two colour multi-function displays, a head-up display (HUD) and hands on throttle and stick (HOTAS). One of the main features of the upgrade is the enhanced electronic warfare capability.

Completing the fighter line-up was an

upgraded F-5E Tiger, among 20 F-5Es upgraded with IAI Elta's multi-mode EL/2032M radar, as well as other associated avionics.

The solution was a sensitive one and still secret, as much is in Morocco, because it came from Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI).

Israel is also thought to have sold, not only the Litening laser designation pod system, but also a batch of light Israel Military Industries Delilah cruise missiles. Equipped with these, the F-5s can focus primarily on the Algerian air defence radars and missile systems, although they have both air-to-air and air-to-ground capabilities.



All Moroccan combat aircraft are net-centric and highly integrated by datalink, courtesy of the newly acquired Raytheon-Thales ground radars. These capabilities did not exist 10 years ago, but today represent a sustained effort very cleverly achieved by Moroccan personnel. "This modernisation programme has been well thought through and will certainly stretch the Algerian air defences, despite Morocco's lack of financial resources," said one insider.

With more than nine million hectares of forests, Morocco, more renowned for its desert conditions, has had some serious issues with wildfires. As a result of trying to increase the confidence of Morocco's farmers as they bid to increase yields, funding was made for five Bombardier 415 water bombers.



Morocco ordered four C-27Js in 2008 and the first was delivered in 2010.

## SOMMAIRE

### La RMAF se modernise

*Alan Warnes a observé de multiples changements au niveau du marché nord-africain de la défense lors de sa visite au salon aéronautique international de Marrakech.*

Plus de 30 avions militaires ont été exposés en avril dernier au Marrakech Airshow 2014 et c'était aussi l'occasion de constater la modernisation des forces armées marocaines (RMAF), même s'il reste encore beaucoup à faire.

La RMAF a mis en avant ses nouveaux F-16, le Maroc étant le 3ème pays au monde à opérer ces avions de combat de dernière génération. Deux F-16C block 52 étaient présents sur le tarmac. La RMAF a également fait l'acquisition de missiles AIM-9X Sidewinder de Raytheon ainsi que de casques JHMCS.

Cubic Defense Systems a annoncé un contrat via l'USAF pour fournir au Maroc un système P5CTS (P5 Combat Training System). C'est une aide précieuse pour les pilotes des F-16C/D. Le Mirage F1EM-VI marocain, l'un de ses 27 Mirages modernisés, figurait aussi parmi les appareils exposés. Ce travaux ont été conçus par le tandem Thales/Sagem Défense Sécurité et réalisés par la société belge SABCA. L'avion de combat F-5E Tiger est désormais équipé de nouveaux radars EL/2032M d'Israel Aircraft Industries.

L'ensemble des avions de combat marocains est aujourd'hui connecté via les nouveaux radars au sol Raytheon/Thales, des capacités que la RMAF n'avait pas il y a dix ans.

Le Maroc, plus connu pour ses conditions désertiques, possède plus de neuf millions hectares de forêts et doit faire face à de sérieux problèmes d'incendie. Le pays a donc assuré le financement pour cinq avions Bombardier 415.

L'Armée de l'Air marocaine a également accueilli de nouveaux avions comme le C-27J d'Alenia Aermacchi, exposé à côté d'autres appareils comme le C-130H, le CN 235, le Beech A100 ou le Beech 200. On pouvait aussi découvrir trois des 24 Beechcraft T-6CS. À noter également qu'à ce jour, neuf des 22 AlphaJet de la flotte marocaine ont été modernisés.

Cependant, la modernisation des hélicoptères reste une priorité majeure pour la flotte d'AB 205 Huey, de Bell 206 Jet Ranger, de SA330J Puma et de Gazelle SA 342M du Maroc. C'est également le cas des Chinook CH-47C qui sont immobilisés. La livraison de trois nouveaux CH-47D devra combler ce déficit en capacité.

Les visiteurs professionnels du salon Marrakech Air Show 2014 ont donc pu se rendre compte, à travers notamment les démonstrations en vol, du dynamisme de la RMAF.

# Morocco...

The last of the five, CN-ATQ, appeared in the static display, while two other aircraft showed off their fire-fighting skills by dropping retardant dyed red and green (the colours of the national flag) during the flying display.

The first Bombardier 415 arrived in Morocco in March 2011 and was followed by an announcement for a further four, valued at approximately \$162 million. Delivery of the first of the second batch came during May 2011 and the last arrived at Kenitra, 3 BAFRA, where they are based, in early September 2013.

Next to it was another relative newcomer to the Moroccan Air Force, an Alenia Aermacchi C-27J, plastered with missile warning receivers under the cockpit. It is one of four delivered between July 2010 and late September 2011 and based alongside the water bombers at Kenitra, where all the other transport aircraft reside.

Completing the transport line up was a C-130H, CN 235, Beech A100 (used for training transport pilots) and a Beech 200. The latter is part of Morocco's indigenous Al Ghait rainmaking system. It is fitted with mods under the wings to jettison chemicals into clouds, forcing them to drop rain over regions where it is most needed. An Alpha Jet used for this role was parked next to it.

Other new acquisitions on display were three of the 24 Beechcraft T-6Cs delivered in 2011. This aircraft has catapulted the RMAF's flying training into the modern era. With a HUD, capability to manoeuvre at -3.5 to +7g and a Martin Baker Mk

16 ejection seat, the student pilot is groomed for flying fast jets. As a result, the T-6Cs have replaced the obsolete T-34Bs and T-37Cs, which are now stored, in bags, on the main ramp at the Marrakech show site.

To date nine of the 22 Alpha Jets earmarked for upgrade into a more capable lead-in fighter trainer (LIFT), have had the work done. One of them appeared in the static display, although we were not allowed to see the new cockpit architecture.

The €27 million (\$36m) contract awarded to Thales in late 2009, saw SABCA carry out the integration of a HOTAS, HUD and other avionics in the front cockpit and a new multi-function display in the rear one. This upgrade has allowed fighter pilots to decrease the gap between the LIFT and fighter without buying a new platform. However, SABCA was keen to market its recently launched Alpha Jet upgrade at the event.

Modernisation of the helicopters must now be a major priority, with the RMAF's fleets of AB 205 Huey, AB 206 Jet Ranger, SA330J Puma, and SA342M Gazelle all from a bygone generation. The same applies to the CH-47C Chinooks, which are all grounded, but at least the delivery of three new CH-47Ds will go some way to alleviating that capability shortfall.

With regular fly-pasts that included most aspects of the RMAF inventory, observers at Marrakech 2014 were treated to a fascinating insight into where the country's air arm is heading.

# Ellipse shapes an aviation breakthrough for Morocco

*The development of an indigenous aerospace industry in north Africa has taken a major step forward, as Alan Peaford reports.*

**T**he first aircraft to be fully assembled and rolled out from a Moroccan factory could be airborne in just over a year's time.

French manufacturer LH Aviation – creator of the LH-10 Ellipse – has launched a subsidiary in Morocco, called LH Aviation Maroc.

The launch comes with an initial \$5.5 million capital investment by Moroccan Karim Bennani and an expectation of a further \$13 million cash injection to build a factory capable of producing up to 80 of the multi-role LH-10M light aircraft for military and para civil operations.

The LH-10M will be the first aircraft built entirely in Morocco. This version of the tandem LH-10 Ellipse will be adapted to operate in the different environments of the African continent.

A spokesman for LH Aviation said that the 19,000sqm facility could be completed as early as the first quarter of next year.

Speaking at the Marrakech Airshow, where the manufacturer was showing the Moroccan public the country's milestone prospect, the company said it sees great opportunities for the type in Africa and the Middle East – particularly with a manufacturing base in Morocco where the 'M' type will be built.

Already LH has sold the type to Benin, South Sudan and the UAE, with five aircraft already operational and six more currently in production.

Demonstration pilot and head of flight operations, Philippe Herrenschildt, said the Ellipse has excellent visibility and can be used in a wide range of missions.

The LH-10 offers a number of 'plug and play' systems and can be fully reconfigured in less than an hour. "It can be used as a cost-effective border control or surveillance aircraft, with operating costs at a fraction of a helicopter," Herrenschildt said.

The aircraft features an interchangeable nose section that allows it to be reconfigured between trainer and attack/surveillance uses.

The first of the aircraft in the Benin colours was displayed at the Paris Airshow last year but, with more recent demonstrations of mission-capable equipment following work with Thales, there is confidence that, once the truly African aircraft is flying, there will be increased demand.

Examples – at events like Eurosatory in Paris for example – showed an advanced surveillance version fitted with an Otus-L170 gimbal sensor turret from Aero Surveillance connected to a ground operator's station. This turret is allied with the Cassidian SAMSARA multisensor command and control system, and has full motion video capability.

The company has also demonstrated an aircraft in close air support configuration, with four launch tubes for TDA 68mm rockets. Both unguided and laser-guided rockets can be carried. According to Herrenschildt, the current 100hp Rotax engine can deliver 155ktas and just 10 litres an hour fuel burn.



The company is believed to be studying a second generation of the aircraft, which could move the fuel tanks from the wing to allow hard points to allow four TDA-Thales rockets to be carried. A new 160hp engine could take cruise speed to 200ktas.

It can remain on station for up to six hours and could even be used as a fast-jet trainer. "With great precision flight controls and excellent manoeuvrability it's just like flying a fighter," said Herrenschildt, himself a former Mirage pilot with the French Air Force.

Built entirely of carbon fibre using an innovative infusion process that improves quality while reducing weight, the Ellipse employs advanced aerodynamics and a modular approach. As a result, the aircraft can be tailored to a wide range of military surveillance and security tasks.

Power is currently provided by a Rotax 912ULS mounted amidships, minimising heat and noise signature.

The Ellipse was the brainchild of then-engineering student Sebastien Lefebvre in 2003. The company was founded a few months later in 2004. Since then Lefebvre – now the chief executive – painstakingly pulled together enough small packages of investment to secure and equip a rented large industrial unit at Melun-Villaroche airport, 35km (22 miles) south-east of the French capital and next to a large Safran engine plant and an early home of Dassault.

France's Sécurité Civile organisation has also leased an advanced surveillance version for evaluation in the fire-fighting support role – an area of expertise that is also vital for Morocco.

Herrenschildt, said the Ellipse and its surveillance system could assist in the detection and monitoring of forest fires, including the transmission of real-time video stream to the command post. "The aircraft can also be used for post-fire assessment, including the detection of gases through the use of hyperspectral sensors."

**Pilots Benoit Buffiere and Philippe Herrenschildt with the first aircraft ever to be built in Morocco, a French-designed LH-10.**







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*Les Bermudes, l'île de Man ou encore les îles Caïmans ont beaucoup développé leurs activités d'enregistrement d'avions privés ou d'affaires (offshore aircraft registration). Il existe en Afrique de nombreuses demandes d'opérateurs pour immatriculer leurs avions mais il n'y a quasiment pas de juridiction compétitive pour les inscrire dans leur registre. Vincent Chappard a enquêté sur cette activité quelque peu méconnue du transport aérien.*



# Maurice peut devenir Bermudes africain?

**P**endant plusieurs décennies, la majorité des avions privés ont été enregistrés aux États-Unis. Cependant, il existe de nombreuses raisons pour lesquelles les propriétaires et opérateurs privés ou d'affaires choisissent, de nos jours, un autre pays pour immatriculer leurs aéronefs. Bien que cette pratique puisse évoquer un pavillon de complaisance comme dans l'industrie maritime, les réglementations de l'industrie aéronautique restent quelque peu différentes.

« Les avions privés et d'affaires sont en opération partout dans le monde. Le choix du registre s'effectue non seulement sur un critère de coût mais essentiellement sur la qualité et la réactivité des services proposés », soutient Nirvan Veerasamy, directeur général de Veling, société mauricienne spécialisée dans la location et la revente d'avions d'occasion et dans le développement du YU Lounge.

Qui sont ces pays spécialisés dans l'enregistrement d'avions privés et d'affaires?

L'Irlande abrite, par exemple, un important centre de sociétés de location d'avions et de nombreux grands jets sont financés hors de ce pays. Les Bermudes ont beaucoup développé cette activité, leur registre comptait environ 250 avions en 2008 pour des revenus estimés à 12,5 millions d'euros (500 millions de roupies), uniquement pour les frais d'enregistrement.



L'île de Man est également un centre d'enregistrement offshore pour l'Europe et dispose d'un système juridique basé sur le droit britannique. La juridiction a ouvert son registre pour les avions privés et d'affaires en 2007. Il comptait plus de 300 aéronefs à fin 2010. Les îles Caïmans ouvrent également leur registre ayant été utilisé comme une juridiction d'inscription pendant un certain temps en raison de leur proximité avec les États-Unis.

Le potentiel d'enregistrement d'avions sur le

continent est freiné par un manque de juridiction (mise à part l'Afrique du Sud) pour offrir des prestations compétitives. Quels sont donc les critères pour qu'un pays du continent puisse entrer dans ce « business »?

Selon Nirvan Veerasamy, la juridiction doit proposer des tarifs attractifs et des services adéquats. Elle doit également avoir un système politique stable et disposer d'un centre « offshore » et financier reconnu, constitué de banques internationales, de juristes et de comptables. Il est enfin nécessaire de mettre en place une politique cohérente pour promouvoir cette activité.

L'aspect légal, le sérieux et la réputation sont donc des éléments primordiaux.

« Les opérateurs privés, qui ne sont pas bien vus par la communauté internationale, préfèrent bénéficier d'un registre que l'on appelle neutre (neutral flag) pour opérer. Cela attirera moins l'attention et diminuera les

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risques. C'est l'exemple des avions privés aux USA qui ne peuvent pas trop se rendre dans certains pays », affirme Nicolas Richard, juriste et associé chez Jurist Consult Chambers, l'un des principaux cabinets juridiques à Maurice.

« Il est nécessaire d'avoir le concours total des autorités compétentes de l'état pour fonctionner », souligne Nirvan Veerasamy. « Celles-ci mettent une politique en place pour faire une opération financière. On traverse ainsi cette ligne rouge où l'on devient une entreprise commerciale d'état. C'est là, où se trouve la principale difficulté. »

Les prochaines opportunités pour ce type d'activités seront en Afrique et l'île Maurice y est idéalement bien placée pour développer son registre et devenir un centre reconnu d'enregistrement des avions privés.



Selon Nicolas Richard, le pavillon mauricien jouit d'une bonne réputation, sans accident.

L'aviation civile mauricienne n'avait pas mis en place des tarifs pour enregistrer un avion privé jusqu'en 2010.

Ceux proposés maintenant sont très compétitifs par rapport aux autres juridictions. Ils peuvent aller jusqu'à 30% de moins que les Bermudes. Lorsque l'on prospecte sur des marchés en Afrique, on s'aperçoit que les opérateurs privés se dirigent vers des registres « offshore » qui ne sont pas dans le même fuseau horaire du continent. Or, la réactivité reste vitale pour les opérateurs privés qui ont souvent



The Isle of Man 'M-register' has proved popular but is limited to private aircraft, such as this Hawker 900XP.

besoin par exemple de validation des licences du personnel naviguant pour opérer.

L'île Maurice est donc idéalement placée géographiquement pour répondre aux demandes africaines. Comme beaucoup de juridictions, le pays accepte également l'ensemble des certifications mondiales (FAA, EASA), ce qui est important d'un point de vue technique, s'il faut valider des opérations de MRO ou des licences de PNC et PNT.

« Le pays est signataire auprès de l'OACI au titre de l'article 83bis, ce qui signifie qu'un

avion privé peut être enregistré à l'île Maurice et être surveillé par une autre autorité, que ce soit le Mozambique, l'Angola ou le Congo », rappelle Nirvan Veerasamy. « C'est l'aide à la surveillance de l'avion. »

Il est intéressant d'évoquer un critère important notamment le financement et l'enregistrement des avions privés qui sont deux activités complémentaires. Même si l'on peut enregistrer et financer un avion dans différents pays, le banquier souhaitera avoir accès à l'avion tant qu'il n'a pas été payé dans sa globalité. L'enlever du registre peut s'avérer parfois très compliqué.



L'île Maurice comme d'autres pays africains peut générer d'énormes revenus en ouvrant son registre que ce soit pour les frais d'enregistrement, les certificats de navigabilité ou d'autres licences.

« Cette activité peut être développée dans le respect des normes de sécurité », souligne Nicolas Richard.

Seul bémol, il semble, selon plusieurs sources concordantes, que l'administration mauricienne travaille trop lentement et ne dispose pas d'assez de moyens pour ouvrir davantage son registre. Le « board of investment » a réuni plusieurs experts pour relancer cette activité mais aucune avancée n'a été constatée à ce jour.

L'activité d'« offshore aircraft registration » reste en pleine mutation au niveau mondial. De nouvelles juridictions arrivent sur le marché comme Saint-Marin ou l'île d'Aruba. Des pays en Afrique peuvent aussi tirer leurs épingles du jeu car c'est un marché qui tombe du ciel avec en particulier l'arrivée d'avions en Russie comme le souligne Nirvan Veerasamy. Car, dès qu'un opérateur optera pour un registre, cela va créer un effet d'entraînement.

## SUMMARY

### Africa eyes up offshore registry

Setting up offshore aircraft registration facilities has brought considerable business to the likes of Bermuda, the Isle of Man and the Cayman Islands – now, according to some experts, it might be time for Africa to benefit.

For several decades, the majority of private aircraft were registered in the United States. However, there are many reasons why private operators or businesses today choose to register their aircraft in another country.

“Private and corporate aircraft are in operation worldwide. The choice of register is made not only on the criterion of cost but on the quality and responsiveness of services offered,” explained Nirvan Veerasamy, managing director of Veling, a company specialising in the leasing and remarketing of aircraft.

Veerasamy said there were a number of criteria needed before a successful aircraft registry could be opened.

“It must offer attractive rates and adequate services. It must also have a stable political system and have an ‘offshore’ financial centre, which is recognised and consists of international banks, lawyers and accountants. Finally, it is necessary to have the total support of the competent authorities of the state to operate,” he said.

So could Mauritius be ideally positioned to generate huge revenue by opening its registry, either for registration fees, certificates of airworthiness or other licences?

According to Nicolas Richard, lawyer and partner at Jurist Consult Chambers, one of the leading law firms in Mauritius, the early signs look good.

The Mauritian flag has a good reputation, without accident, he said. “The Mauritian civil aviation department had not established rates to record a private plane until 2010. Those offered now are very competitive with other jurisdictions. They can be up to 30% less than Bermuda. Mauritius is ideally placed geographically to meet African demands. Like many jurisdictions, the country also supports all global certifications like FAA and EASA, which is important if we validate MRO operations or PNC and PNT licences.”

The only downside, it seems, according to several sources, is that the Mauritian Government works too slowly and does not have enough capacity to further open its register.

The ‘board of investment’ has brought together several experts to review this activity but no progress has been observed to date, said our source.



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The Pilatus PC-24 jet over Geneva.  
Inset: The Piaggio Avanti EVO.  
Below: An aerial shot of the static display at EBACE.

*With the financial crisis starting to fade and worldwide sales and activity picking up, EBACE was a place of optimism if not many sales – with one notable exception that has great relevance to African operators.*  
**Ian Sheppard** reports from Geneva.

# GENEVA'S





The African Business Aviation Association (AfBAA) was exhibiting at this year's EBACE as it celebrated two years since its formation, in May 2012. The organisation's founding chairman, Tarek Ragheb, said it had 60 members representing all types of companies involved in business aviation. It was keen to portray the sheer size of Africa, issuing a map that underlined how business aviation could be of great benefit in the continent.

# AIR OF OPTIMISM

«Un vent d'optimisme à Genève» – Page 62

**W**ith a flood of orders for its new PC-24 jet at EBACE, from a standing start, Pilatus was celebrating selling out through 2020. The aircraft is designed with operations into smaller airports in mind, following the heritage of the Swiss manufacturer's popular PC-12 single-engine turboprop. The first contract was signed with the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia, while US fractional share programme operator PlaneSense ordered six. Falcon Aviation Services of the UAE was also among the many customers for the Williams FJ44-powered aircraft. Interestingly, there were very few actual order announcements at the EBACE show, other than Pilatus's – with few other manufacturers notching up more than the odd aircraft or two. Top of the list of other manufacturer announcements was the launch of the Dassault Falcon 8X, creating a new top-of-the-range Falcon. The move wasn't entirely unexpected, since the company revealed the new 5X at the NBAA

show in Las Vegas last October. The \$58 million 8X is expected to make its maiden flight in early 2015 with certification around a year later. At EBACE, the French manufacturer announced that chairman and CEO Serge Dassault would take the first example of the aircraft, which will be powered by three P&WC PW307D turbofan engines. Piaggio came to Geneva with a surprise in store, in the shape of the Avanti EVO, upgrading its distinctive twin turboprop-pusher Avanti II design with enhanced cabin features, winglets, redesigned engine nacelles, reshaped front wing and five-bladed composite scimitar propellers. The aircraft has better comfort and performance, said Piaggio Aero CEO Carlo Logli. The standard-configuration range is stated to be 1,470nm, with 1720nm maximum range. The Italian manufacturer bills the EVO as "perfection through evolution" and underlines that the aircraft is the world's fastest twin turboprop, with a maximum speed of 402KTAS.

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Bombardier, meanwhile, revealed a mock-up of the cabin it is designing for the new Global 7000 long-range jet. The Canadian OEM said that, at 11 ft, it was the longest ever business jet mock-up.

The 7000 is due to enter service in 2016 and will offer a range of 7,300nm at Mach 0.85. Bombardier Business Aircraft president Eric Martel said the cabin would offer "the most comfortable long-flight experience to passengers and crew members".

The flightdeck, also included in the mock-up, has side-stick controllers and large Rockwell Collins Pro Line Fusion displays as part of its "Global Vision" flightdeck.

Bombardier confirmed that the Global 7000 and 8000 aircraft designs are progressing on track, with most production drawings now released as part of the detailed design phase. Some structural assemblies have already been started.

Not to be left out, Gulfstream announced the G650ER as it attempted to regain the initiative from Bombardier. The extended-range version of its fast-selling, long-range flagship will fly 7,500nm at Mach 0.85. This will make it the longest range of any business jet, adding 500nm to the already-impressive 650's range figure. A faster cruise at Mach 0.9 yields a range figure of 6,400nm.

Cessna and Beechcraft came to EBACE under a single company umbrella for the first time since Cessna owner Textron Aviation acquired Beechcraft. The company's CEO, Scott Ernest, made clear that it would not produce any more Hawker jets but would support them for customers.

Expanding its wide range of models, in Geneva Cessna was giving its Sovereign+ its European debut, while its Citation X+ and CJ3+ were both said to be due for certification this year.

The Textron turboprop line-up now includes both Cessna Caravans and Beechcraft King Airs, models that are ideal for Africa. The company reported that the Caravan EX had received EASA certification just before the show.

Also on the turboprop front, Daher-Socata brought its new TBM 900 single-PT6-powered single to the show. The upgraded version of the TBM 850 had already been selling well, with several delivered already, despite it only being revealed publicly two months before EBACE. Almost 50 are due to be shipped by the end of 2014.

Embraer came to EBACE with examples from its complete business jet line-up, including the new Embraer Legacy 500, and the Legacy 450. The 500 was nearing the end of flight testing, while the company was also showing off its

**Aerion announced that it had redesigned its Mach 1.4 supersonic business jet (SSBJ).**



**Daher-Socata brought its new TBM 900 single-PT6-powered aircraft to the show.**

**SOMMAIRE**

**Un vent d'optimisme à Genève**

*Avec les effets de la crise financière qui commencent à s'estomper, la convention EBACE 2014 a été un haut lieu d'optimisme. Ian Sheppard enquête depuis Genève.*

**Même si la convention EBACE 2014 a enregistré peu de signature de contrats de la part des grands industriels, elle a cependant fait l'objet de beaucoup d'annonces. Seule la société Pilatus a enregistré un flot de commandes pour son nouveau PC-24.**

**Dassault a lancé son Falcon 8X, son nouveau avion d'affaires haut de gamme. Son premier vol est prévu en début 2015 pour une certification un an plus tard. La société Piaggio a fait une présentation surprise de l'Avanti EVO, une version améliorée de son avion Avanti II. L'EVO devient ainsi le bi-turbopropulseur le plus rapide au monde.**

**Bombardier a révélé la maquette de la cabine conçue pour le nouveau Global 7000. Il doit entrer en service en 2016. De son côté, Gulfstream, a annoncé le lancement du G650ER, la version « Extended Range » de son avion d'affaires. Cessna et Beechcraft ont exposé sous le même pavillon pour la première fois. Le PDG de la société, Scott Ernest, a informé l'arrêt de production des Hawker. Elle continuerait toutefois à la soutenir pour ses clients. Embraer a présenté ses avions d'affaires dont les nouveaux Legacy 500 et Legacy 450. HondaJet a, pour sa part, indiqué que les travaux pour sa certification FAA (prévue début 2015) progressent. Airbus et Boeing étaient également présentes lors de cette convention pour mettre en exergue la performance de leurs avions VIP, dont le nouvel Airbus ACJ319 « Élégance » ou encore le BBJ Max de Boeing qui sera équipé des moteurs Leap de CFM.**

**Côté des turbopropulseurs, Daher Socata, a présenté son nouveau TBM 900, la version améliorée du TBM 850. Enfin, la société américaine Aerion a annoncé une nouvelle conception de son avion d'affaires supersonique SSBJ, désormais un triréacteur qui pourra être équipé des moteurs actuellement en développement.**



Phenom 100 and 300, Legacy 650 and Lineage 1000E, which is based on its popular E190 regional jet operated by several African airlines, including Kenyan Airways.

Honda Aircraft Company reported that progress continues towards FAA type certification of its HondaJet in early 2015, and that the first production example had entered final assembly (they are being built in Greensboro, North Carolina, in the US). The Japanese firm says more than 100 of the aircraft, which have engines over the wings on unusual wing-mounted pylons and have an asking price of \$4.5 million, have been sold.

Airbus and Boeing were also at the event, with Airbus extolling the virtues of its VIP airliners. Airbus was spreading the word about its new ACJ319 Elegance, which offers easy-to-select cabin modules, while Boeing spoke of enhancements to the performance of its BBJ Max, which will have CFM's Leap engines.

At the more exotic end of the technology spectrum, US company Aerion announced that it had redesigned its Mach 1.4 supersonic business jet (SSBJ) so it is now a trijet, a move up from two engines, which will allow it to use in-development engines such as GE's Passport – though it won't announce a selection (the Rolls-Royce BR 710 and PW800 are also contenders) until the next NBAA show, which will take place in Orlando, Florida in October this year.

The AS2 aircraft also has a larger cabin, maximum take-off weight of 115,000lb (up from 90,000) and more range (5,000nm plus, up from 4000), all enhancements requested in a recent operators' survey – although the price has now risen to more than \$100 million, which survey respondents in general said they would be willing to pay.

The AS2 will retain the laminar-flow wing technology of the previous design, which is the "key enabling technology" allowing the aircraft to cruise efficiently sub-sonically (Mach 0.95) yet accelerate to supersonic speeds (up to Mach 1.6). The company said at EBACE that first flight was anticipated in 2018 or 2019.

Among other notable announcements were Wheels Up revealing early plans to enter the European market, probably with Farnborough-based Gama Aviation, which is operating a Wheels Up King Air 350i fleet in the US. The companies are hoping to have a European operation up and running by summer 2015, but no intention to enter the African market has been detected thus far.



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**“It is important that we continue to have this conference and create the right awareness, so that our aviation correspondents can ensure that the right kind of information is communicated.”**  
SEGUN DEMUREN

*Nigeria is the fastest growing business aviation market in Africa. Alan Peaford was in Lagos for the second Nigerian Business Aviation Conference (NBAC) and found an industry boosted by government support but still facing a wall of prejudice.*

# Awareness key to changing perceptions

It was unfortunate that as delegates from around west Africa met in Lagos for the second annual NBAC, organised and hosted by EAN Aviation, the headlines in the Nigerian newspapers were challenging government ministers and their use of business jets amid accusations of abusing government funds.

For Segun Demuren, the CEO of the host company, it was a familiar challenge – changing the perception of business aviation by recognising its value, not just to the Nigerian economy, but also the whole region.

“At a time when we are in the news for less than accurate reasons, there might be those who try to promote a caricature of business aviation that is at odds with the facts,” he said.

“The reality is that thousands of individuals in all our combined businesses play vital roles in this very important sector of the economy and, so far, represent the successes that business aviation has achieved to date.

“It is important that we continue to have this conference and create the right awareness, so that our aviation correspondents can ensure that the right kind of information is communicated.”



NBAC saw an increase of more than 25% in the number of delegates as government, operators and service providers came together – boosted by the fact that Nigeria has overtaken South Africa as the continent’s fastest growing business aviation economy with more new and pre-owned aircraft.

The country’s private jet fleet is now larger than the commercial aircraft fleet. Growth has been driven predominantly by the oil and gas industry.

**“The time saving, the convenience and the increased productivity means business aviation is not a luxury but an essential tool for growth in Nigeria.”**

CAPTAIN NOGLE  
MEGGISON

However, other sectors including finance, manufacturing, telecoms and agriculture are all contributing to a market that is set to grow by 20% this year, according to speakers at the conference.

“Everyone says the same thing: “We believe in Nigeria. We are committed to Nigeria and we are willing to understand how we can do business successfully in Nigeria,” Demuren said.

Among the key calls from the conference was for the industry to resolve the problem that any aircraft put on a 5N (Nigerian) registry will lose asset value by as much as 25%, yet incur higher insurance premiums – up to 35% higher in some cases.



Maintenance and service support still remains a challenge and, while the fleet continues to grow, there are no accurate figures for the amount of jets operating in Nigeria.

Educated guesses say between 100 and 150, with an anticipated 350 set to be in operation by 2016.

Demuren emphasised that business aviation was not a toy of the rich, but an essential tool for business.

His view was backed by Captain Nogie Meggison, chairman of the airline operators’ committee, who said that transport logistics within Nigeria stimulated growth with poor roads, a limited domestic airline fleet and train network, which meant that executive jets provided a solution to much of the logistical challenges in the country. “The time saving, the convenience and the increased productivity that follows means business aviation is not a luxury but an essential tool for growth in Nigeria,” he said.

The conference heard that the Nigerian



Left: Acting Director General of Nigeria's CAA, Eng Benedict Adeyileka reiterates the country's commitment to business aviation growth. Right: Nogie Meggison, chairman of Nigerian Airline Operators Committee (centre), leading a panel on growth opportunities, said business aviation could benefit from the country's poor commercial aviation network.

Government is supporting expansion, having removed import duties on new jets and having signed the Cape Town convention, reassuring lessors about asset security. It has also invested in new infrastructure, including a private jet terminal that opened last year in the political centre Abuja, and it does not impose any restriction on the amount of time a foreign-

registered private jet can stay on Nigerian soil. But manpower and human resources are still an issue. Demuren said: "The struggle is to educate and train as quickly as possible. Knowledge transfer will take some time before we have enough home-grown engineers." Ettore Poggi, MD of ExecuJet Africa, argued

that real economic growth within the sector would come from the business of supporting private jets through training, support and maintenance. "We need to encourage aircraft operators and owners to keep maintenance checks in country. If we begin with A and B checks, then the heavy maintenance will follow," he stressed.



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*Business aviation is on the cusp of great expansion in Africa as it responds to the economic potential of the continent, according to one of the world's major trip support businesses. Alan Peaford reports.*

## Going business is the way forward in Africa



**Mohammed Husar:**  
"Private and chartered planes can land at airports not served by commercial airlines, making them all the more important for getting decision makers to key meetings and work sites."

Commercial aviation's failures could be giving business and corporate markets a gigantic boost as African economies continue to grow.

And Dubai-based UAS International Trip Support is putting investment money behind its belief in Africa as it aims to have a UAS supervisor on the ground in every country in Africa.

UAS co-founder and executive president, Mohammed Husar, said: "Commercial airlines and ground transportation are not keeping pace with the travel needs associated with new ventures. Not only that, private and chartered planes can land at airports not served by commercial airlines, making them all the more important for getting decision-makers to key meetings and work sites.

"Our job at UAS is to make sure those planes have fuel, permits, parking, and handling, as well as ensuring top-quality care for passengers and crew."

Forecast to be one of the world's fastest-growing economic areas, Africa will see a rise in air traffic, with flows between Europe and Africa growing at an annual average rate of more than 5% for the next 15 years.

"Business aviation is the key to tapping the enormous economic potential of Africa," Husar said.

Husar has been critical in the past of ground support that switches the high-visibility jackets to bear the name of whichever trip support company is paying them. "It needs to be more than that," he told delegates at an AfBAA conference in Morocco. "UAS recognises that successful trip support in Africa depends on a combination of local knowledge and professional networks."

As a result, UAS has been laying the groundwork to cover the continent for more than a decade. Its 24/7 operations centre at its Middle East headquarters in Dubai has been running for nearly 15 years and offers service in 20

languages. Already this year the company opened a continental headquarters in Johannesburg, and in the past few months has added regional offices in Nairobi, and Lagos. But, before that, it had stationed agents in key locations across Africa, establishing essential relationships with aviation authorities and suppliers, and delivering trip support to some of the region's most remote and challenging destinations.

"Presence and contacts are only half the picture," Husar said. "Quality is the other half. Anyone doing business in Europe is accustomed to a high level of service, professionalism, and attention to detail. This is why it is essential to have someone on the ground in every market. It allows us to investigate everything from catering to accommodation to security, and to make sure all elements of the trip proceed smoothly and are in line with expectations.

"For both our commercial and business clients, local presence also gives us advanced notice of gate and schedule changes, weather conditions, and other real-time events that will not be available online until well after the plane lands."



This heightened focus on quality has been paying off. UAS served more than 7,000 flights in Africa in 2013, and expects to grow its business on the continent by 30% this year and by 50% in 2015. Its business development programme includes rigorous recruitment criteria that ensure local representatives not only speak the requisite language, but also have a deep understanding of the business environment and maintain constant contact with authorities. All staff are trained in the methods and standards of the International Air Transport Association.

"For trip support, UAS is setting the standard for excellence globally," said Husar. "From our perspective, clients should have the same seamless experience and level of service whether they are in Houston or Hong Kong, Germany or Chad, Dubai or Equatorial Guinea."

Abdul Oricha, an industry veteran with more than 15 years of experience in west Africa is leading the new Lagos office.

"With Africa and African aviation on the rise," said Oricha, "first-class support services will be needed in major hubs as well as in more remote locations."

Oricha's trip support and airline background extends to countries as diverse as Nigeria, Senegal, Cameroon, Niger Republic, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea, Togo, Chad, and Liberia. He will leverage this experience to initiate, build, and maintain relationships with civil aviation authorities, regulatory bodies, and third-party suppliers in the region.

"It is an exciting time to be in west and central Africa," he added. "The region's close relationship with other emerging markets has made it vital to global business and has increased the demand for trip support."

UAS now has offices in Johannesburg, Nairobi and Lagos.



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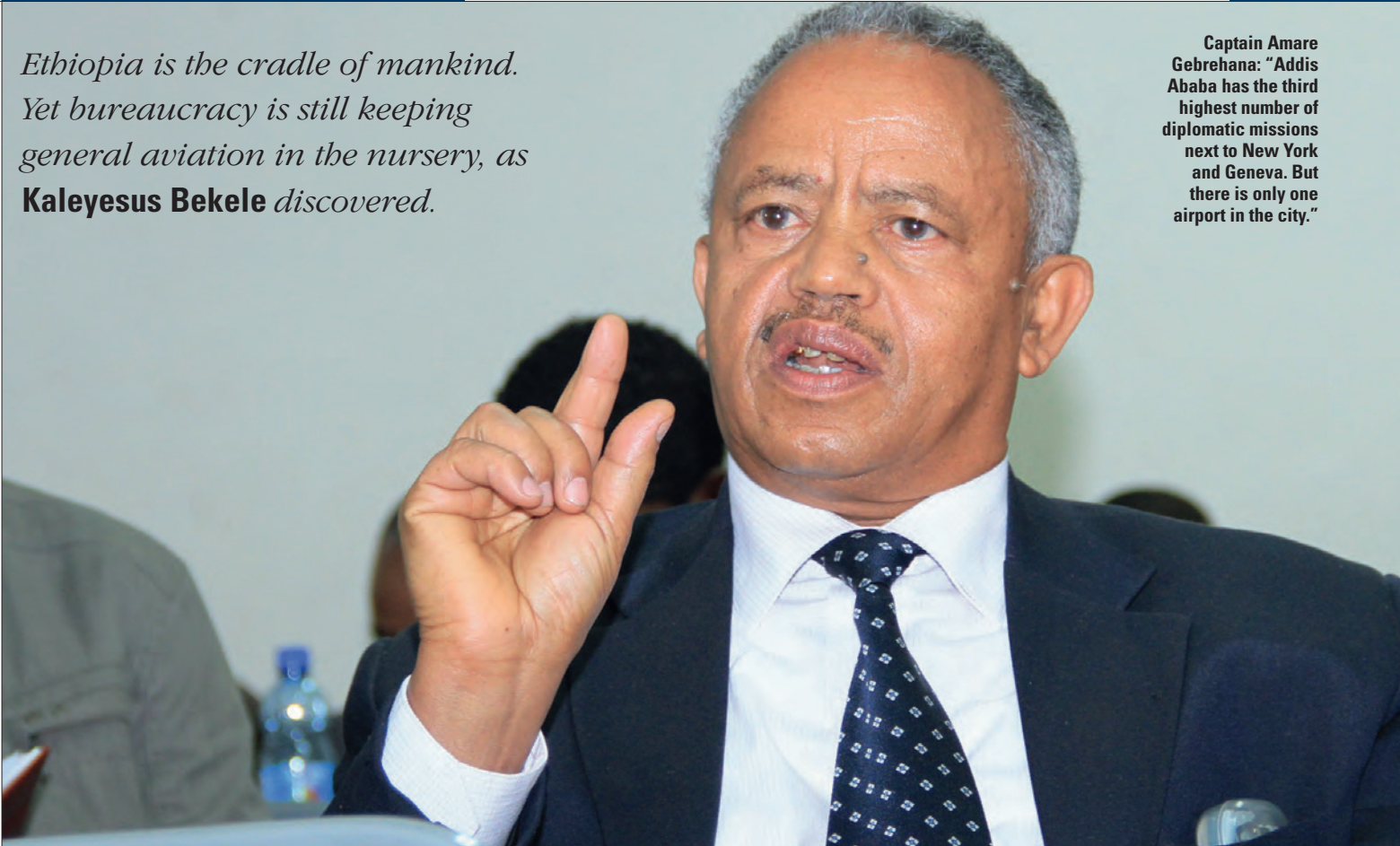
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*Ethiopia is the cradle of mankind.  
Yet bureaucracy is still keeping  
general aviation in the nursery, as  
Kaleyesus Bekele discovered.*

**Captain Amare Gebrehana:** "Addis Ababa has the third highest number of diplomatic missions next to New York and Geneva. But there is only one airport in the city."



## Red tape keeps Ethiopia's evolution under wraps...

«L'aviation éthiopienne menottée par la bureaucratie» – Page 72

**T**hough Ethiopian Airlines has a glorious history that started in 1945, general aviation is still in its infancy.

There are 16 foreign airlines that fly to Addis Ababa. However, it is only Ethiopian Airlines that operates domestic flight services in the country. Foreign airlines are not allowed to run domestic flights.

Private operators, until recently, could not operate an aircraft that had more than 20 seats. Recently, the seat limitation was pushed to 50 but, still, domestic flights can only be operated by Ethiopian nationals and foreign investors cannot invest in private airlines.

In 2011, the number of registered private airlines reached 26, but only six of them were active. Accordingly, the Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority (ECAA), the regulatory body of the aviation sector, revoked the licences of 20

registered airlines on the grounds that they were not operational.

Currently, there are six private airlines that provide charter flight services – Abyssinian Flight Services, National Airways, Trans National Airways, Suhura Aviation, Amibara General Aviation and Zemen Flight Service.

Amibara Aviation is a pesticide dusting company, while Suhura Aviation provides cargo charter flight services.

The rest provide charter flight services in Ethiopia and neighbouring countries.

Ethiopia is a land-locked country and air transport is of crucial importance. The road network and railway lines are not well developed yet and the rugged terrain makes air transport indispensable. Despite all this, the domestic airline industry is highly under-developed.

Only a handful of private airlines provide

charter flight services, and these are for construction and mining companies, tourists, the diplomatic community, government officials and UN agencies. They also conduct aerial surveys and air ambulance services.

Compared to other African countries, such as neighbouring Kenya, Ethiopia's general aviation sector lags far behind.

According to the private operators, the general aviation sector is facing several challenges. Captain Amare Gebrehana, deputy managing director of Abyssinian Flight Services, said the environment for general aviation business was "not conducive".

According to Gebrehana, the major problem is the country does not have a national air transport policy. "What should be the role of the general aviation in Ethiopia? What is the

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government's stance towards private investment in the aviation sector? It is not clearly stated. I heard that the Ministry of Transport is preparing a national aviation policy. But we do not have detailed information about it. If we get the chance to read the draft we will comment on it," he said.

All the country's private airlines are based in Addis Ababa but there is only one airport – Addis Ababa Bole International Airport – to accommodate the increasing amount of international, domestic and charter flight services. A wide-body aircraft like the Boeing 777 and a light aircraft as small as a single-engine Cessna use the same runway at the airport.

"Those of us who operate light aircraft have to wait for the big airliners to take off," said Gebrehana. "Addis Ababa is the political capital of Africa. As it is the seat of the African Union there is a high concentration of diplomatic missions... probably Addis has the third highest number of diplomatic missions next to New York and Geneva. But there is only one airport in the city. There is no other airport dedicated for general aviation."

The private airlines do not have a maintenance hangar at the airport. Abyssinian Flight Services asked the Ethiopian Airports Enterprise for a plot of land where it could build a maintenance hangar 14 years ago. "It is only very recently that we got a positive response from the Enterprise," said Gebrehana. "We participated in a bid and won a plot of land for the

construction of a maintenance hangar. [But] there are [still] pending issues to secure the land and start construction."

Tewodros Dawit, CEO of the Ethiopian Airports Enterprise, said that there was no legal framework to enable it to grant land to anyone. "Recently, we prepared a directive that allows private operators to secure space for the construction of a maintenance hangar. And we will soon be able to grant land for the private operators. But we will not give the land to all applicants. There are things that we consider," said Dawit.

"Some of the applicants do not have the capacity to build a maintenance hangar. We have our own evaluation methods. We grant the land for those who are really committed to develop their business."

Captain Abera Lemi, CEO of National Airways, said general aviation is a sector that was highly regulated and under-supported. "The government does not give due attention to general aviation. It could be lack of awareness," he lamented. "The government is striving to

## Eight decades of history

**The general aviation business in Ethiopia has a long and fascinating history, dating back to 1927 when the first light aircraft – named 'Tsehai' – was assembled in Addis Ababa. That aircraft was subsequently taken by troops during the Italian invasion of 1936 and stored in a museum in Rome.**

**During the reign of the late Emperor Haile Selassie, members of the Royal family, as well as local and foreign business people, used to import light aircraft into the country. Investors engaged in large commercial farming used to operate light aircraft to visit their properties. There was also a private airline that used to provide charter flights and pest dusting services called Admas Air.**

**In the wake of the 1974 socialist revolution, the military junta confiscated all the private aircraft. Ethiopian Airlines remained the sole operator in the country for the next two decades. However, after the demise of the socialist government in the 1990s, small private airlines began to flourish. The current status, though, sees general aviation struggling to survive.**



**Captain Abera Lemi: "We are not allowed to operate an aircraft with more than 50 seats. Today you do not easily find aircraft with less than 50 seats. Even if you find some, you cannot be profitable with small aircraft. How can we venture into scheduled flight services?"**

develop the agriculture, manufacturing and tourism sectors. Why not the aviation sector? It could be lack of awareness. They do not seem to understand the importance of general aviation. The government is committed to develop the tourism sector. General aviation could support the tourism sector if there is a conducive environment for it to grow."

He added: "Many people in the government do not understand the role the general aviation sector could play in the economic development of the country. When you speak to some of the government officials about the aviation sector they tell you about Ethiopian Airlines. When we ask permission they ask us if we have consulted with Ethiopian Airlines. The airline is an operator like any of us, even though it is 100% owned by the government."

Finance is the other major problem facing the general aviation sector. The private operators claim that the local banks do not have a clue about aviation.

Captain Gebrehana said executives of the banks did not even know how to extend loans to airlines. "When we went to the biggest

commercial bank in the country asking for loan for aircraft purchase we got a big no answer. Executives of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia asked us funny questions. What if the aircraft crashes? What if it flies out of the country and never gets back? This shows you that there is no awareness at all at the banks."

The National Bank of Ethiopia allows limited businesses to access foreign

financing and this makes it harder for private operators to access financing.

Captain Lemi said the sector is highly regulated. "We are not allowed to operate an aircraft with more than 50 seats. Today you do not easily find aircraft with less than 50 seats. Even if you find some, you cannot be profitable with small aircraft. How can we venture into scheduled flight services?"

He added that the government wanted to protect Ethiopian Airlines but asked: "Ethiopian is competing globally with mega carriers like Emirates. How can we small private airlines be a threat to the national flag carrier?"

Tewelde Gebremariam, CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, said his management has no objection if the domestic market was liberalised. "The issue does not have anything to do with Ethiopian Airlines. We are not making money from our domestic operation. In fact, we subsidise the domestic service from the revenue we generate from international operation. As a national carrier we are obliged to offer affordable

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Colonel Wossenyeleh Hunegnaw: "A transport policy would address all the concerns of the private operators."

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fares on domestic routes. Do the local private operators have the capacity to launch a scheduled service? No I do not think so."

Tax is another debatable issue. The private operators claim that there is no clear written information regarding customs duty that private airlines should pay to the government. They claim that, based on the country's investment law, they were supposed to be exempted from customs duty for aircraft parts that they import from abroad. "However, we often engage into disagreements with the Ethiopian Revenue and Customs Authority because of tax issue," they said.



An official at Amibara General Aviation said his company was requested to pay customs duty for the spray aircraft that it imported some time ago.

"Tractors are imported free of customs duty. How come you tax a spray aircraft? Both are machines used for farming. But we were forced to deposit a huge sum of money at the customs authority for a long time until the issue was resolved. Our money was tied up," the official said.

Colonel Wossenyeleh Hunegnaw, director general of the Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority, said that the government does want the country's general aviation sector to prosper. According to Wossenyeleh, the major problem is the absence of a national air transport policy. "Though the country has a long aviation history, to date it does not have an air transport policy that governs the aviation industry," he said.

He added that, for the first time, the authority, in collaboration with the Ministry of Transport, was formulating a national air transport policy. "The transport policy would address all the concerns of the private operators," he commented.

The local private operators are also calling for market protection.

They say that charter flight service providers come from other countries and operate in Ethiopia, though the ECAA's regulation does not allow foreign airlines to operate. The foreign companies take millions of dollars every month, they assert. "We cannot go to Kenya and operate there. But Kenya-registered aircraft are providing charter flight services in Ethiopia," Captain Lemi said.

Captain Gebrehana agrees: "While we [the local operators] can provide the service, foreign companies are taking the business. We pay tax to our government.

"We employ native people. But the foreign companies come and take a huge portion of the small pie," he lamented.

Colonel Wossenyeleh denies the accusation. "We give priority to the local operators. However, the capacity of the local private airlines is limited. When foreign mining and construction companies are unable to find the type of aircraft that they require, we allow them to bring a foreign operator," he said.

The private operators are demanding meetings with senior government officials [policy makers] to discuss the fate of general aviation. Whether they succeed remains to be seen.

## SOMMAIRE

### L'aviation éthiopienne menottée par la bureaucratie

*Même si Ethiopian Airlines a un passé glorieux, l'aviation nationale n'en est qu'à ses balbutiements. Une enquête de Kalesus Bekele.*

Ethiopian Airlines est aujourd'hui la seule compagnie à exploiter des vols domestiques.

Addis-Abeba est pourtant desservi par 16 compagnies étrangères. Ce marché reste donc largement sous-développé. Il existe six compagnies privées en Ethiopie mais elles ne peuvent pas opérer un avion de plus de 50 passagers. L'Ethiopie est un pays enclavé et le transport aérien est crucial, d'autant plus que le réseau routier et ferroviaire n'est pas développé.

Selon le Capitaine Amare Gebrehana, directeur adjoint d'Abyssinian Flight Services, pointe du doigt l'absence d'une politique nationale sur le transport aérien. Il n'y a que l'aéroport international Bole d'Addis-Abeba qui accueille l'ensemble des compagnies ainsi que le nombre croissant des vols. Il n'y toujours pas d'aéroport dédié à l'aviation privée.

Le Capitaine Abera Lemi, directeur général de National Airways, estime que l'aviation est un secteur fortement réglementé et pas assez soutenu. Les opérateurs privés pourraient stimuler le développement de l'agriculture, de l'industrie et du tourisme. Ils en appellent également à la protection du marché par rapport aux compagnies étrangères qui assurent des vols vers Ethiopie. Le gouvernement semble aussi privilégier l'opérateur étatique, Ethiopian Airlines.

Pourtant, Ethiopian Airlines ne voit pas d'objection à une libéralisation du marché domestique selon son PDG, Tewolde Gebremariam. La compagnie ne fait pas de profits sur ces routes, elle les subventionne. Elle doute également de la capacité des opérateurs privés locaux à pouvoir assurer un service régulier.

Une politique nationale pour un développement intégré du secteur se dessine progressivement même si celle-ci ne peut répondre à toutes les préoccupations des opérateurs privés. En tous cas, ces derniers souhaitent participer activement aux discussions sur l'avenir de l'aviation en Ethiopie.



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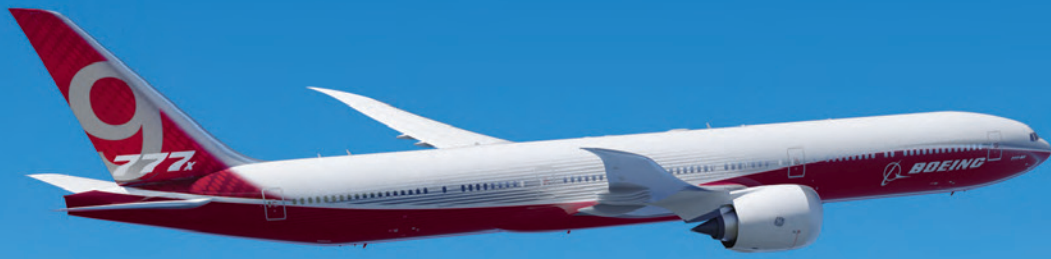
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# FIGHTING TALK

*Despite contending with a volatile boardroom and an irreverent local media, Monwabisi Kalawe, the new boss of South African Airways, sees a bright future for the troubled flag-carrier. **Martin Rivers** finds out why.*

**W**hen Monwabisi Kalawe took on the role of CEO at South African Airways (SAA) last June – the fifth person to hold the title in as many years – he knew he was in for a rough ride.

South Africa's heavily loss-making, state-owned flag-carrier has been castigated by local and international press for its apparent inability to stamp out management corruption and operational inefficiency. The announcement of a long-term turnaround strategy last year did not quell the protests, becoming the ninth such programme to be unveiled since the turn of the century.

Sure enough, it did not take long for the negative headlines to come flooding in. In May 2014, less than one year into Kalawe's tenure, *Business Day* claimed that he was being investigated over four separate allegations of serious misconduct.

Worryingly, the report was alleged to have been leaked by none other than Dudu Myeni, SAA's acting chairperson. That stoked

fears that the boardroom had fallen prey to the same bitter infighting that broke out in 2012, when chairperson Cheryl Carolus and six other board members resigned en masse.

Yet, despite the challenging climate, Kalawe betrayed no hint of anxiety as we met at the IATA AGM in Doha. To the contrary, his demeanour was self-assured and relaxed throughout.

"I am so proud of what we have achieved since I joined the airline," he began. "What I learned from my previous jobs is to allow your staff to speak their mind. And they do this. Our people know that they can say anything freely.

"It was inevitable that when all these people joined the board at once [after the 2012 resignations], there will be conflict. We have seen that. But am I worried? Not at all. We are past the worst."

Indeed, SAA wasted no time in rubbishing the report by *Business Day*, issuing a statement within hours that decried the "inaccurate information" it contained and affirming that the board "stands

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# SOUTH AFRICA

While SAA has replaced its 4-engined regional jets (such as this Avro RJ85) with modern Airbus narrowbodies, buying inefficient 4-engined Airbus A340s has caused it to struggle for years so it is desperate to get modern twin-engined replacements.



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firmly behind” its CEO. As for Myeni, Kalawe said it is too early to pre-judge whether she was the source of the claims. Newly appointed public enterprises minister Lynn Brown will conduct an investigation, he insisted, and the chairperson should be given the “benefit of the doubt” until the findings are clear.

With his reputation intact and a strong mandate to continue the turnaround plan, Kalawe is turning his attention to the nuts and bolts of SAA’s creaking business model.

Overhauling the wide-body fleet remains the most potent weapon for stemming the losses. Although SAA improved its operating result by 21% last year, that still entailed sinking 991 million rand (\$116 million) into the red. The flag-carrier’s controversial nonstop service to Beijing was responsible for a huge chunk of that loss, haemorrhaging about 300 million rand during the year.

Phasing out SAA’s 18 fuel-guzzling Airbus A340s is, therefore, critical. The four-engine jets will be replaced by “between 20 and 25” newer models, Kalawe said, with leases being favoured over acquisitions due the airline’s precarious financial situation.

Upgrading to more fuel-efficient wide-bodies is not a new plan – interim predecessor Nico Bezuidenhout had promised the same measure last year – but the government scrapped SAA’s previous request for proposal (RFP) after objecting to the lack of “localisation” measures.

In South Africa, high-value transactions by the government, or its parastatals, must abide by the national industrial participation (NIP) programme. NIP ensures that “local enterprise has the opportunity to benefit” from such transactions, Kalawe explained, and the commitments outlined

in the previous tender did not sufficiently address these obligations. SAA’s upcoming RFP will be re-specified in accordance with NIP.

In an effort to fend off further accusations of inappropriate behaviour, the board also selected an independent transaction advisor on May 20 to oversee the process.

“The deadline that the government has given us to conclude the RFP process and select the manufacturer or lessor is October 2014,” Kalawe confirmed. “The number, I would estimate it to be anything between 20 and 25. Our ambition is for the first two or three to start coming in 2017, 2018.”

SAA’s Beijing route, meanwhile, remains a touchy subject. Former Public Enterprises Minister Malusi Gigaba last year cautioned against shedding loss-making but strategically significant routes, and Kalawe appears to share that viewpoint.



Asked if he would consider shifting to a codeshare service operated by new partner Etihad Airways over Abu Dhabi, Kalawe said this was “an option” but not the preferred approach. Instead, the Chinese Government has agreed to change SAA’s landing slot from 21:30 to 17:30, facilitating domestic connections. Frequencies will also rise from three to four times weekly, while seating capacity on each flight has fallen by switching from an A340-600 to an A340-300.

“The combination of better landing slots, higher frequencies and a different aircraft gauge were done to make the route viable,” Kalawe explained. “Our government

has said to us they want a connection between South Africa and Beijing, so as management we’ll do the best that we can to reduce the losses or get to breakeven.”

As an end-of-line carrier, some of SAA’s long-haul services may ultimately never become profitable. If that proves to be the case, the airline will request a “fiscal transfer mechanism” that ring-fences strategic routes for government subsidies.

Although not an ideal solution, Kalawe defended the measure by highlighting a recent Oxford Economics study commissioned by the government. It found that SAA’s total direct and indirect economic contribution to South Africa stands at about 21.6 billion rand per year, underscoring the need to preserve strategic links like Beijing.

On the narrow-body front, SAA’s long-standing order for 20 A320s is finally bearing fruit. Sale-and-leaseback deals have been signed for the first 10 units, with four arriving last year and the other six due by 2015.

“Our next step then is to find funding for the remaining 10, and those deliveries should start around June/July 2015,” Kalawe added. “Our deadline [to arrange financing] is December 2014. By the end of 2017, all 20 will be delivered to SAA.”

Overhauling the narrow-body fleet has a deeper significance for the Group. SAA’s existing short-haul passenger fleet comprises six A320s, 11 A319s and 11 737-800s. As the new A320s arrive, the flag-carrier will gradually hand over its 737-800s to low-cost subsidiary Mango. That will allow the no-frills brand to substantially grow its nine-unit fleet, expanding in the domestic market as well as looking beyond South Africa’s borders.

“Mango is a well-run business,” Kalawe said. “Nico [Bezuidenhout]

**“I have to look internally to fix my business before I can have the luxury of trying to look outside.”**  
**MONWABISI KALAWÉ**

SAA shifted its Boeing 737s to low-cost subsidiary Mango when it started receiving Airbus A320-family aircraft.



**“We are hand-picking various countries that we think are suitable for the Mango product.”**  
**MONWABISI KALAWÉ**

and his team have done, and continue to do, good work. Our turnaround plan says we must increase the capacity of Mango in South Africa, because the domestic market is starting to become very price sensitive.”

Although Mango’s only existing international route is from Johannesburg to Zanzibar, Tanzania, Kalawé said southern and west African destinations are on the radar.

“We are hand-picking various countries that we think are suitable for the Mango product,” he affirmed. “There are some people who are talking to us and saying they like the low-cost model, so please come and assess Mango for their countries. Those conversations are in the initial stages.”

Moreover, as well as potentially exporting Mango’s brand to west Africa for the first time, SAA is moving forward with ambitious plans to establish a subsidiary in that corner of the continent.

The west African hub project was one of the four alleged scandals exposed by *Business Day*. Kalawé was accused of negotiating a takeover of bankrupt Senegal Airlines without the board’s approval. It is a claim he vociferously denies, pointing out that studies into three west African locations – Nigeria, Senegal and Ghana – were sanctioned by the board when he joined SAA last June.

“As part of our long-term turnaround strategy, it has been agreed that we need to set up a hub somewhere in west Africa,” he noted. “Nigeria fell off the table immediately, because our experts believed its infrastructure wasn’t suitable for setting up a hub.”

Senegal was next in-line for consideration. A visit by Senegalese officials late last year prompted an in-depth review of cooperation between the two countries, including not just SAA but

also logistics firm Transnet and utilities firm Eskom. “So our due-diligence experts went across and looked at Air Senegal,” Kalawé recalled. “It stood out that they were heavily indebted and had some issues with their leases... So the recommendation was that it’s not commercially viable for SAA to consider taking up equity in the business.”

Asked why Senegal’s finance ministry had suggested that talks advanced much further, he smiled and said: “If you’re a seller, you want to excite the public! But I can assure you that SAA never made an offer.”



With Nigeria and Senegal ruled out, Ghana is now the favoured location for a west African hub. A delegation from SAA was en route to Accra as *African Aerospace* was going to press, and efforts to find a local partner were being “fast-tracked” thanks to an agreement signed between Airports Company South Africa and the Ghana Airports Company Limited.

Pending the necessary approvals, Kalawé is hopeful that the subsidiary could get off the ground within two years. He even said that partnering with Asky, the Togo-based affiliate of Ethiopian Airlines, would be “one of the options”, although rivalry between the two flag-carriers makes this a challenging proposition.

Elsewhere, SAA’s partnership with Abu Dhabi-based Etihad offers “huge opportunities for synergies” at the level of procurement and training. Describing the “good chemistry” between the two sides, Kalawé noted parallels between Etihad’s local training initiatives and SAA’s efforts to foster socio-economic development

among South Africa’s disadvantaged black citizenry.

“Etihad has been very successful with their Emirati development programme,” he said. “SAA has a responsibility to develop black opportunities in South Africa, so maybe we can exchange notes in those areas.”

Although such partnerships offer potential cost savings, the overriding priority for SAA remains optimising its fleet and securing the next tranche of government funding.

Initial estimates that the turnaround plan could deliver profitability by “2017 or 2018” may have been optimistic, with several “fundamental assumptions” proving misplaced. These included stability of the rand – down 20% last year – and the presumed withdrawal of the Beijing route. Nonetheless, talks between SAA’s finance department, the public enterprises ministry and the national treasury are progressing well, and another capital injection is expected soon.

Asked about efforts by numerous start-ups to break the domestic duopoly enjoyed by SAA and Comair, Kalawé responded in a characteristically laissez faire manner.

“I have to look internally to fix my business before I can have the luxury of trying to look outside,” he insisted. “There will always be people with ambitions to go into this industry. Our ex-colleagues [Siza Mzimela, Theunis Potgieter and Jerome Simelane] have started Fly Blue Crane. Whether they are going to survive or not, only the market will tell.

“And if they survive, someone else is going to want to start another airline. It’s a very sexy, attractive industry to many people!”

More than 40,000 trade show visitors flocked to the Africa Aerospace and Defence Show in 2012 and that number is expected to be exceeded when this year's event takes place in September. **Marcelle Nethersole** reports.



On parade: SAA Airbus A340, with Pilatus PC-7 trainers. Inset: SAAF Saab Gripen.

## Defence show ready to attack the market

**A**AD2014 – the premier exhibition of air, sea and land technologies on the African continent – takes place at AFB Waterkloof, Centurion in the City of Tshwane, South Africa between September 17 and 21.

The show holds a prominent position within the aviation and defence calendar and this will be its eighth edition.

Once again it brings together various aerospace and defence industries from throughout the world to showcase the latest technological innovations within its sector.

This year's event will see seven hangars, 15 national pavilions and 350 exhibitors from 26 countries, as well as 84 aircraft – both civil and military – on the static display.

Exhibition director Leona

Redelinghuys said: "AAD2014 will host a good mix of first-timers and repeat exhibitors, some with increased exhibition space. Confirmed exhibitors include Milkor, Reutec, Tellumat, MTU South Africa, Wagtail Military, Imperial Armour, Osprey Logistics, BAE Systems, OTT, Rippel Effect, Turbomeca Africa, Denel, TWA Africa, Barloworld Power, Cassidian Optronics, Paramount and DCD Protected Mobility."

AAD was set up as a platform for smaller and medium sized enterprises, or manufacturers of component technology for the aerospace sector, to exhibit, meet and network with new business leads.

AAD2012 saw 40,000 trade visitors from Asia, Europe, Middle East, as well as Africa. Aircraft taking part in the flying display included: Motorised

Paraglider Formation, Gripen, Cheetah and Hawk formations, Silver Falcons and gyrocopters.

This year's flying programme will only be confirmed on the first day of the show.

Besides focusing on aviation, the show will again bring together some of the world's military and civilian vehicles to be showcased over a specialised military track. Land-based vehicles will be put through their paces as they tackle a challenging obstacle course over difficult terrains and water features.

This is designed to introduce the military vehicles to trade visitors during the three trade days. Exhibitors and vehicle manufacturers are invited to display the true capabilities of their products on the track.

AAD organisers are also hosting a youth development programme (YDP) after its success in 2012.

The YDP encourages South African companies in the aerospace, maritime and defence industry to sponsor career development for young people, who would eventually benefit the industry.

September 17 is the first of three dedicated trade days with the weekend of September 20 and 21 open to the public for the massively popular air show.

"To encourage attendance to AAD2014 there will be entertainment for the whole family, static displays of aircraft, trucks and armoured vehicles and an entertainment park for children," said Vhongani Shumba, AAD marketing and public relations manager.

The number of international exhibitors such as Saab looks set to increase this year.







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*Chris Zweigenthal, CEO of the Airlines Association of Southern Africa (AASA), is looking to better understand the patterns of demand, as he explained to Victoria Moores.*

As South Africa gears up to host Africa Aerospace and Defence 2014, the country's commercial air transport industry is showing a hint of recovery after a crippling slump in demand. While global air traffic grew 3.1% in March, Africa was the only region to go backwards, declining 2.6%. Over the first quarter, this translated into just 0.2% African growth, compared with a global average of 5.6%. IATA said this weakness was partly caused by South Africa's slowdown.

"At the moment African airline growth is not as high as we would like it to be. Some countries are growing well; others are not. This is something we will look at during our conference this year; how do you unlock the impediments and what is holding us back," said AASA CEO Chris Zweigenthal.

South Africa had a tough 2013, with little or no growth, but towards the end of the year there were signs that things might be picking up. "We are beginning to experience some growth. It is a slow recovery. Domestic travel in South Africa is around break-even, but on the international side there has been growth," said Zweigenthal. "We are hoping to see an upward trend later this year."

There are two key drivers behind the drop-off in demand. The first is the poor performance of the South African economy, which is only tracking at about 2% GDP growth. Around this level, the correlation between GDP and traffic growth drops off.



"For some reason, 2013 went a bit off that trend," said Zweigenthal. "The situation in South Africa is an anomaly which I can't fully explain. I hope to see a return to growth in 2014, particularly the second half and into next year. Our forecast for this year is 2-2.5% overall growth, followed by 3% in 2015 and 4% in 2016, but I hope the actual performance will outgrow that."

The other driver was the liquidation of South African low-cost carrier 1time in 2012, which took out a player with 10-15% domestic market share. The airline's demise removed capacity from the market, pushing up fares and stagnating demand. This combination meant a large number of people were driven to think twice about travelling.

While several start-ups have sought to fill 1time's shoes, the void has not yet been filled. "Some bits of capacity have been

# WHY SOUTH AFRICA IS SO DEMANDING



**1time went out of business in 2012: it had 10-15% of the domestic market.**

replaced, but it doesn't match what we had before 1time went out of business. They had high load factors and, at the moment, no airline has replaced them," said Zweigenthal.

The three key contenders were FastJet, Skywise and Flysair, but all of these projects have run into difficulties.

FastJet was hoping to enter the South African domestic market through partnerships, firstly by resurrecting 1time and latterly by forming a tie-up with South African investment company, Blockbuster, and its airline partner, Federal Airlines.

However, the deal to acquire 1time from its liquidators failed to materialise and the Blockbuster/Federal Airlines partnership has also gone quiet. FastJet's domestic South African launch was partly postponed because it secured its first international route rights, allowing it to fly from Tanzania to South Africa, but even that was delayed at the eleventh hour due to red tape.

Zweigenthal said FastJet hit ownership barriers with its 1time acquisition, which forced it to put its domestic market entry on hold. The Blockbuster/Federal Airlines deal would also have required FastJet to seek additional route rights, as Federal Airlines is only active on a few thin routes. "At the moment, there is no sign that they are getting back to South Africa. This will come at a later stage," he said.

Another player in the quest to snatch 1time's market share was Skywise, a start-up that was backed by 1time's original owner. Skywise secured its licence, but failed to get its remaining preparations lined up within the one-year grace period. "Their time ran out and there has been no indication of their intent to reapply for a licence," said Zweigenthal.

Skywise was instrumental in blocking the third project, low-cost domestic start-up Flysair. This initiative stemmed from established South African ad-hoc operator Safair, which is looking to branch out into scheduled services. However, Comair and Skywise successfully blocked Flysair's launch at the last moment on ownership grounds.

Flysair now claims to have resolved these issues with a shareholder shake-up and, according to Zweigenthal, is planning to launch later in 2014.



Amid this flurry of start-up activity, South African Airways has been undergoing its own difficulties. SAA has gone through a period of severe management instability, coupled with financial woes, and it has struggled to formulate a long-term strategy, while its key rivals, Ethiopian Airlines and Kenya Airways, have stormed ahead.

"I really hope the new CEO, who has come in with great intent, will be able to turn SAA around. It has a lot of challenges and issues, so I hope he gets it right. We need a strong industry and a strong national carrier," said Zweigenthal.

Meanwhile privately owned Comair has been snapping at SAA's heels and has just placed an order for 737 MAXs.

Casting an eye over the rest of the southern African region, Ethiopian Airlines has been working to revamp the former Air Malawi as Malawian Airlines, mirroring its successful partnership with ASKY in Lome, Togo.

Air Namibia has taken new aircraft and Air Zimbabwe is trying to overcome its leadership challenges with a new acting CEO.

**“The situation in South Africa is an anomaly which I can’t fully explain. I hope to see a return to growth in 2014.”**

**CHRIS ZWEIGENTHAL**

“Southern Africa, excluding South Africa, is tracking the trend of the rest of Africa at about 4-4.5% growth,” said Zweigenthal. “For Africa to take its place [in the wider industry], it has to grow even more than that.”

In particular, the AASA chief is keen to see whether the African countries that rank in the top 10 of world GDP growth will see this potential reflected in their aviation industries.

Closer to home, AASA itself is being kept busy with a number of regulatory dossiers, including a project looking at the planned capital expenditure of South Africa’s airports and air navigation service provider for the next five years.

“One of the most important things for the success of aviation in the region and Africa is to make sure all sectors of the industry are working together,” said Zweigenthal.



The team is also heavily involved in a legal glitch in South Africa’s ratification and implementation of the Cape Town Convention, which should give lenders more security over their assets and airlines access to cheaper fleet financing. “Some of our airlines which are buying aircraft are not able to utilise the benefits of the Cape Town Convention,” explained Zweigenthal. “We are working with various government departments to make sure this is fixed.”

Another dossier on Zweigenthal’s desk is consumer protection. South Africa is pushing through a new act on consumer protection, which spans all industries. This means that every sector has been tasked with putting together a code of conduct and the airlines are no exception. This code – which will cover cancellation, denied boarding, etc – should be submitted, although not necessarily approved, by the end of the year.

Finally, Zweigenthal’s team is heavily wrapped up in the sustainability debate, representing the southern African airline industry as ICAO seeks to establish global market-based measures for aviation emissions.

With other topics, such as safety management and training remaining high on the association’s priority list, things are not dull in South Africa right now. And by the time delegates start arriving for Africa Aerospace and Defence 2014, South Africa’s commercial air transport industry will, hopefully, be on the mend and making further progress towards recovery.



# ACSA sets itself a

**T**he global economic crisis of 2008 and 2009 hit South African travel hard. There was a drastic reduction in passenger numbers and figures for people departing from the country's airports had still not returned to 2008 figures by the end of the 2013 financial year.

ACSA projections forecast no growth in the 2013/14 financial year (17.4million) and minimal growth for the following two years.

It is then expected that growth will accelerate to 26.5 million in 2024, 52% over the period.

"The slow recovery in departing passenger numbers clearly demonstrates the lethargic growth that threatens the health of the industry and even the viability of some of its players," said Bongani Maseko, ACSA's managing director. "Forecasts for the 2013-14 year are for minimal growth at best," he added.

Johannesburg OR Tambo International (JNB) remains the busiest airport in Africa, handling more than 18.6 million passengers and almost 200,000 aircraft movements in the past financial year.

Between 2012 and 2013, international passenger movements at JNB reached 8,276,845, up 2.3% from the previous year. Regional passenger movements stood at 826,676, down 2.3%, while domestic numbers were down by 5.5% at 9,437,069.

*Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) has set itself some ambitious targets for the decade to come. **Keith Mwanalushi** looks at how the company is transforming South Africa's airports and the strategy behind its international expansion.*

Despite the drop, JNB still reigned supreme at the 2014 Skytrax World Airport Awards by scooping the number one airport in Africa prize, followed by Cape Town International and Durban's King Shaka.

The health of the world's airline industry and growth in passenger numbers are obviously synonymous. An oversupply of seats in the past few years, coupled with high fuel prices, has placed significant pressure on airline profitability in a number of markets and South Africa seems to be no exception.

"Whatever the argument, there is no doubt that the aviation sector continues to suffer from the uncertain recovery of the world economy, an oversupply of seats and consistently high fuel prices," Maseko stated.

Last year ACSA approved a 10-year business plan, which included domestic upgrade investments. Earlier this year JBT AeroTech was awarded a contract valued in excess of US\$5 million for the supply of gate equipment at JNB.

The contract with ACSA includes the supply of jet-way passenger boarding bridges as part of the airport's on-going terminal infrastructure updates.

Maseko is convinced that ACSA is now moving into a period of consolidation and preparation. "The most important aspects of consolidation are the ways through which we optimise the facilities we own and operate."

He is confident that efficiencies will flow from improved service facilities provided to airport partners, "and it includes our taking advantage of the latest technologies, such as the use of faster and more sophisticated X-ray equipment at security checkpoints and the inevitable advances in information technology".

The most significant development in recent times is, of course, King Shaka International Airport (DUR) in Durban. The R7.9-billion greenfield airport is South Africa's second-largest transport infrastructural project after the Gautrain rapid rail link.

**"There is no doubt that the aviation sector continues to suffer from the uncertain recovery of the world economy."**

**BONGANI MASEKO**

**CPT will see a new  
realigned runway.**

PHOTO: ANDRES DE WET



# mountain to climb

DUR is a major step up compared to the old Durban International, which became too small to handle the growing traffic. With 102,000sqm of floor area in its passenger terminal building, King Shaka currently handles around five million passengers annually but has the capacity to handle 7.5 million, with room for significant future expansion.

The 3.7km runway is fully capable of up to A380 operations and there is additional provision for future construction of a possible second runway.



DUR has 34 aircraft parking bays, 16 air bridges, 72 check-in counters, 18 self-service kiosks, 52 retail outlets, more than 6,500sqm of retail space, and 4,500 vehicle parking bays, including a multi-storey car park.

The terminal building incorporates the latest design concepts for passenger movement. The airport is also among the first to utilise a bird radar system, directly linked to its control tower. The radar provides real-time information on bird movements near and around the runway to combat potentially hazardous bird strikes.

Over at Cape Town International (CPT), the latest works involve the relocation and upgrade of the passport control area at a cost of R4.7 million



(\$440,000). The upgrade aims to improve the queuing system for passengers, as well as ensuring there are better facilities available.

The passport control area has now been moved to its permanent space closer to the international departures duty free area. Deidre Davids, the communications manager at CPT, said that with the new and improved facility, "agent immigration officers are now able to see airport users clearly, which will assist them with the profiling of passengers".

The emigration area is made up of 14 counters for personnel, as well as for the associated Department of Home Affairs. An automated queuing system has also

**Durban's King Shaka  
airport is the second  
largest transport  
infrastructure in  
South Africa.**

PHOTO: KIERON THWAITES

been installed, as well as turn-style gates, to ensure personnel and passengers entering the area are processed separately. All employees have now to swipe their cards, which will also assist in preventing tail gating, according to ACSA.

Other infrastructure projects at CPT include a new realigned runway, and additional parking and car rental parking bays.



JNB was once notoriously renowned for its missing bags. To address this, the airport operator has made a multi-million rand investment in the latest technology to improve baggage handling and management. The company reports that JNB's baggage management statistics are now faring competitively when compared to the global averages.

In 2009, 18 bags were mishandled per 1,000 departing passengers at JNB and this has dropped significantly in 2013 to nine per 1,000 departing passengers.

Airport charges in Africa are generally high and often regarded as something that stifles the growth of local airlines on the continent. Airlines in South Africa have often expressed concerns about the increase in airport charges, but the ACSA defends its position.

Continued  
on Page 84

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It points out that the regulator's ruling that tariffs to cover the cost of infrastructure development may only be implemented once facilities have been brought into operation resulted in the 34.8% tariff increase in the previous financial year and 6.5% in the 2012-13 year. ACSA increased its tariffs by 5.6% from April 2014. The increase, which was approved by the regulating committee, was reportedly implemented in consultation with the relevant industry stakeholders.

Maureen Manyama-Matome, ACSA's financial director, said it was necessary to remember that airport charges are one of the key revenue sources for the company. "This practice is not peculiar to South Africa's aviation industry, as it is standard practice globally. The increase is CPI-linked and took into account the sluggish economic conditions and the impact of high fuel prices on the operational viability of the aviation industry."

She further stressed that this was not an imposition from ACSA but a regulating committee undertaking dating back to 2007. "The company could only start levying tariffs, at the insistence of stakeholders, once infrastructural developments were completed and in use. Moreover, the industry was informed that the resultant levies of the five-year cycle would be substantial," elaborated Manyama-Matome.



Maseko is confident that the business has now achieved a degree of maturity, resulting in the preparation of its 10-year plan to guide the company in a structured manner for the 2014 – 2024 period. "Clearly defined in this 10-year plan is the need to make adequate preparation for the next round of infrastructure development, but only when the aviation industry has the necessary appetite," he noted.

Clearly, international expansion is a key part of future growth prospects, ACSA is already involved in airport concessions in both India and Brazil and May 2014 marked the completion of one of its biggest infrastructure projects ahead of the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil.

ACSA is part of a consortium that inaugurated the newly built terminal 3 at São Paulo's Guarulhos International Airport, ahead of the World Cup games,

**"We will strive to ensure that the region can provide airport facilities and services to compete with any in the world."**

**BONGANI MASEKO**

which by international standard was quite an achievement since it delivered on time and on budget.

"The readiness of the gateway to Brazil is assured," Maseko said. "This new terminal follows international standards and will become a reference point for airport infrastructure in Brazil. ACSA's commitment to the concession, through its provision of technical skills and expertise in operational efficiencies, will come to fruition as Brazil's busiest airport increases passenger capacity by 12 million a year, in addition to the current 30 million handled by the three existing terminals."

Maseko and his team have also set out to expand into Africa. As part of its ongoing focus and expansion into emerging markets, ACSA recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Ghana Airports Company Limited (GACL) to provide advisory and technical consultancy services on all airport-related matters in Ghana.

The deal involves the two entities working together in technical, operational, commercial and strategic business development aspects of the aviation industry, with the objective of providing adequate facilitation and commercial airport services for the stakeholders.

According to figures from GACL, air traffic in Ghana has been experiencing phenomenal growth in recent years, with domestic traffic growing by more than 30% per annum and international passengers by around 10%.

The growing economy in Ghana has put pressure on the country's relatively

**Cape Town's new terminal.**

PHOTO: ANDRES DE WET

underdeveloped airports, especially the main gateway of Kotoka in Accra. The upgrade of facilities is essential and the deal will include the building of a new terminal.

Maseko commented: "We have the ability to compete in international markets through our involvement in some of the BRICS markets and, hence, we will strive to ensure that the region can provide airport facilities and services to compete with any in the world. The focus on Africa remains critical to our business in order that the continent earns its deserved place as a meaningful contender in the global economy," he explained.



Closer to home, the key drivers of economic regulation and GDP growth will determine the speed at which new infrastructure capacity is delivered.

The South African economy remains fragile and the local airline industry is turbulent. Every start-up airline that has been established in recent years has folded.

Given the challenging domestic market and the well-publicised heavy losses at home carrier SAA, it does little to boost passenger numbers as the flag-carrier will potentially be evaluating the future of its loss-making international operations.

In the meantime, ACSA reports that the group will continue to promote its airport business by retaining focus on safety and security, enhancing customer service, driving airport efficiencies, improving satisfaction levels for both passengers and airlines, and promoting transformation in all aspects of the business.





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*Comair is a rare success story in South Africa's troubled aviation market. Chief executive Erik Venter talks to **Martin Rivers** about his strategy for staying one step ahead of the competition.*

# COMAIR STAYS ON THE FLIGHT SIDE OF THE LAW

The decision by FastJet to postpone its domestic launch in South Africa – originally slated for July last year – gave Comair breathing space to consolidate its network and prepare for the arrival of four aircraft in 2015.

Chief executive Erik Venter remains sceptical that the low-cost model can be rolled out across Africa, so he is resisting the urge to deploy low-cost unit Kulula in neighbouring countries.

But Comair will have to keep on its toes in the fast-evolving competitive landscape. Flag-carrier South African Airways (SAA) has embarked on a long-term turnaround plan – likely to involve elevating the role of low-cost subsidiary Mango – while FastJet is set to become a regular fixture in the country with its Dar es Salaam-Johannesburg route.

Venter argues that both carriers have fallen foul of South African law – either on anti-competitive or foreign ownership grounds – and he has no qualms about proving his point in court.

SAA's 5 billion rand (\$490 million) government guarantee has already been the subject of legal action by Comair. "We just have to wait for a court date," Venter said, reiterating his long-standing belief that state support allows the flag-carrier to undercut fair market prices.

Pouring cold water on SAA's 20-year-turnaround plan, he warned that recently appointed chief executive Monwabisi Kalawe will have his work cut out at the state-owned entity.

"He's going to be immensely challenged. If you're coming into a company that's already running reasonably well, then it's ok to come from an external industry and just pick up the reins," Venter said in reference to his counterpart's lack of airline experience.

"But coming into a company in such disarray, and not having industry knowledge, is going to be a monumental challenge."

Nor does FastJet escape his criticism, despite the initial postponement of its entry to the domestic market. Complaining about the structure of its upcoming South African subsidiary – which will be 75% owned by a consortium linked to Edward Zuma, the son of the country's president – Venter said the deal almost certainly falls foul of South Africa's strict foreign ownership laws.

"If the South African Civil Aviation Authority does its homework and says that FastJet's structure is not compliant with the Civil Aviation Act, then we won't need to do anything," he said. "But if the Civil Aviation Authority doesn't taken adequate action, then we might have to get involved."



His objection stems from foreign ownership regulations that oblige the holders of domestic air operator's certificates (AOCs) to be in "active and effective control" of their airline. "At the end of the day it all boils down to who's ultimately in control," the chief executive said. Venter believes that London-based FastJet PLC – as opposed to its local AOC partner, Federal Air – would be calling the shots behind the scenes.

Although he accepted that liberalising foreign ownership could be a positive step for the continent, he stressed that changing the law only makes sense for South Africa if done in tandem with other countries.

**"We can't open ourselves up to foreign carriers taking over in South Africa if we don't have the same advantages."**  
ERIK VENTER

"Reform would have to be applied across the continent before we could accept any changes in South Africa. We'd need a reciprocal change on the other end of the routes," he insisted. "This would have to be a global initiative. It can't be changed one country at a time. We can't open ourselves up to foreign carriers taking over [in South Africa] if we don't have the same advantages."

With flag-carriers across the continent still "trying to protect their home turf", such reform is a distant prospect. In its absence, Comair will continue challenging perceived breaches of the law.

Beyond preparing for litigation, however, Venter is busy pushing ahead with his airline's fleet renewal. Comair currently operates a fleet of nine Boeing 737-800s, 10 737-400s and seven 737-300s across its low-cost Kulula and full-service British Airways brands.

Four of the -800s were delivered last year, with the final instalment of four more units scheduled for 2015. Once they have arrived, Venter said he would gradually phase out the -300s.

"They have reached the end of their rational economic life," he explained. "We will end up with a fleet of all -800s and -400s. And slowly but surely we'll migrate to all -800s. But it will take a while."

Venter has no interest in switching type, insisting that Comair has had "fantastic service" from Boeing and describing its products as "the right aircraft for Africa". With Comair's loyalty to Boeing affirmed, he said that re-engined MAX aircraft are now in his sights.

"The next step is to start looking at the next tranche of new -800s beyond 2015," Venter noted. Highlighting Comair's





**“Trying to operate a low-cost model in Africa is virtually impossible. All the distinguishing marks of low-cost carriers around the world just don’t work in Africa.”**

ERIK VENTER

options for eight more -800s, he continued: “We will be having some talks with Boeing... I suspect they will probably become 737-800 MAXs. What we’ve typically done is had options on a number of aircraft beyond our immediate order, so that we can flex to whatever the market does.”

Although the fleet is being renewed, Venter is wary of plotting regional expansion for Kulula’s domestic network. His scepticism about the pan-African low-cost model contrasts not only with FastJet but also SAA, whose Mango subsidiary launched charter flights from Johannesburg to Zanzibar in March 2013.



“There’s a few projects we’re looking at,” he said cautiously. “But trying to operate a low-cost model in Africa is virtually impossible. All the distinguishing marks of low-cost carriers around the world just don’t work in Africa.”

Closer to home, SAA’s strengthened codeshare partnerships could take market share away from Comair. Venter has responded by holding “very high-level” talks with International Airlines Group (IAG), the parent company of franchise partner British Airways. “We’re watching what IAG is doing,” he confirmed. “But at the moment we’re still very much in the franchise camp.”

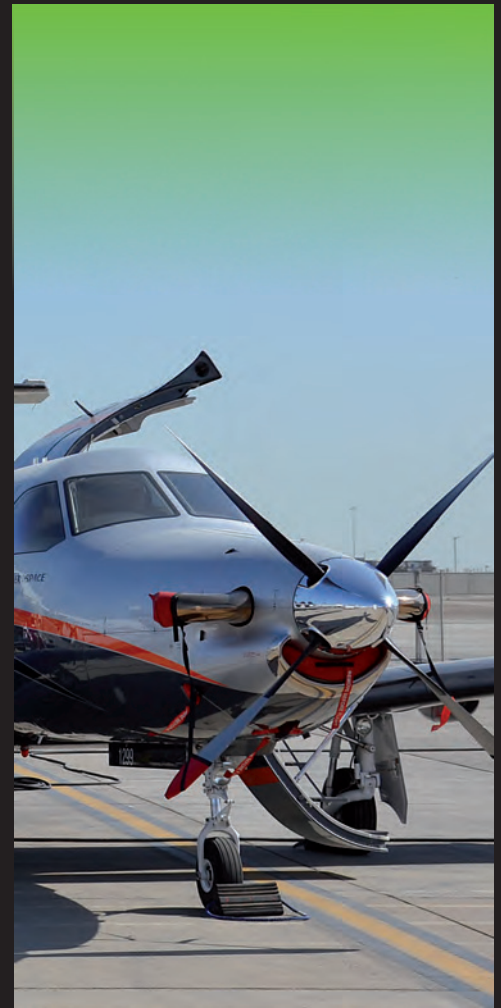
Having been profitable for 67 consecutive years, Venter said Comair’s foremost strength is stability in its boardroom and workforce. “We’ve only had four CEOs, and many employees have been here for 20 years,” he noted. Continuity in the wider marketplace, however, may prove elusive.



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## Kings of the load...

*A new South African cargo airline has launched out of Durban's King Shaka International Airport, surprising the industry with its sudden appearance.*  
**Tom Pleasant** reports.

**K**huphuka Kings Airways signed a deal with Dube TradePort to start twice-weekly scheduled cargo flights from Durban to Lubumbashi in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Lagos in Nigeria from late May.

The airline is the creation of Dr Musa Mdluli, a medical doctor by profession, but one who has been involved, he says, in aviation for many years.

"I started Khuphuka Courier Services several years ago and that sparked my interest in the airfreight industry. Cargo is more viable and less risky than passenger because there is too much competition in South Africa. DRC and Nigeria though, from our studies, show a lot of potential."

There exist few, if any, records of Khuphuka (meaning 'rise up') Courier Services, only Khuphuka Tours, a tour operator and exhibitions business. The parent company, Khuphuka Investment Holdings, is recorded as being incorporated in 1998, but has never filed any accounts within South Africa.

Regardless, Mdluli must be doing something right, since launching an airline is rarely cheap. Khuphuka will initially operate three cargo aircraft: two Il-76s and an An-12, which have cargo capacities of 46 and 20 tonnes respectively. These it currently leases but Mdluli refused to provide any more details on the terms of the lease or the name of the leasing company.

He did say the airline launch had taken three challenging years: "It's not easy to penetrate the industry, because coming in as an outsider, people doubt you. But I'm very pleased with the positive response we have had from freight forwarders and shippers. After about three months, we expect we will be able to increase the number of flights, which will then mean we will be able to increase our fleet. As time goes on, we would look to buy our own [aircraft]."

Mdluli said the airline planned to branch out from Africa

to start serving the Middle East, India, China and Brazil, in the near future.

"Brazil is a very interesting market," he said. "There is a large development of trade between it and South Africa, so we hope to start servicing there before the end of the year, maybe in October or November."

Africa may be one of the few global growth regions for the industry, but it is still a brave time to start an airline anywhere. Mdluli is confident, though, that the demand is there to satisfy the airline's predicted growth.



"If you look elsewhere on the continent, the road infrastructure is not well developed, unlike in South Africa, and trucks are often delayed at borders for two or three days. The solution is for African countries that struggle to move cargo by road to use air cargo instead. It is definitely the way to go and I'm sure many companies currently using road freight will come to us.

"For example, while we will mainly be carrying fruit and vegetables, we will also be flying mining equipment into the DRC. From there we are hoping to bring down various minerals, such as copper, because the mines are complaining of delays of up to a week for cargo coming down from DRC to South Africa by road."

Mdluli said there would also be the opportunity to make a stopover in Zambia's copper-rich Ndola province on the way.

Khuphuka will also not limit itself to cargo, as Mdluli plans to introduce passenger services as well, but not within South Africa. "We will be flying internal flights in the DRC and Nigeria. The routes we are looking at are Lubumbashi to Kinshasa and Lagos to Abuja. We may have a once-a-week flight to Lagos or Lubumbashi from Durban, but that is still uncertain."

Having recently ordered an MD-83 passenger-to-freighter conversion from AEI, with an option for two more, Sanjeev Gadhia, owner of Kenya-based all-cargo carrier Astral Aviation, must be feeling that his wallet is considerably lighter. **Tom Pleasant** asked him about plans for growth.

# Astral takes the MD-83F on safari

There are a variety of reasons why Sanjeev Gadhia would be attracted to the MD-83. “First, it allows us to carry 20% more payload than the DC-9, but with the same operating costs,” he pointed out. “That’s a very big advantage.”

The carrier’s existing fleet consists of two elderly DC-9 freighters and in late May it also acquired a Fokker F27 freighter from Dubai-based Falcon Express Cargo. The MD-83 order will boost its capacity significantly.

“Important to us was range,” said Gadhia. “Africa is a very large continent – you can fit the US, Europe, India and China into it and still have a lot of space left – so the MD-83, being able to fly 30% further than the DC-9, attracted us more than payload.”

“The other thing is that you can order them with auxiliary fuel tanks, so they can fly even further. One of the big challenges in Africa is that many landlocked destinations don’t always have a regular supply of fuel. With a longer-range aircraft we can tanker all of our fuel from Nairobi and fly back without refuelling.”



He said the model was a “natural choice”, but admitted all is still not certain. “The MD-83 is still a relatively new aircraft and this will be the first time it’s used in Africa. While, on paper, it has all the right qualities and characteristics, once it gets off the ground it could operate very differently.” That is why he plans to keep the DC-9s as back-up, at least until the MD-83 has “gone on safari for a few months”.

Gadhia admits there were few model types that would suit both the carrier and the region.

“Our market segment is between 15-20 tonnes, so that rules out the 757s, the 767s, and the A300s, leaving only the 737-400 or the MD-83. Ultimately, though, I think it’s the right choice for Astral and for Africa, and I predict we’ll eventually see about 50 of them serving the continent [with various carriers].”

That requires continued growth in the intra-African air cargo market, but Gadhia is confident of that. “I predict it will grow by 20% per year, which is phenomenal. That is because of the rise of the African middle-class consumer and because of all the oil and gas projects taking place here.”

He points to the largest natural-gas project in the



DC-9s are great but Astral can't wait to enjoy the greater efficiency promised by its first MD-83.

world currently under way in northern Mozambique, a region that is almost devoid of transport infrastructure, as a perfect example. “The airport equipment [for the region] can be very poor, so that you can’t get a [Boeing] 777F or even a 747F there. They need to go to a hub, such as Nairobi or Dar es Salaam, and then the cargo goes on to either a smaller aircraft or a shipping vessel.”

For Astral, with local knowledge and the right freighters, that isn’t an issue. It also means that while, as Gadhia admits, the company is still small, its size is an advantage as it gives it the ability to look at projects such as this and then to adapt and offer solutions a larger company could not easily do.

“Sometimes, when you’re small you have the flexibility to do unique things you would never have thought about before. We are still quite small, so when we see a unique business opportunity we are still able to jump at it based on instinct. Mozambique is just one example of that.”

The project’s size and scope means Astral plans to fly to the provincial capital of Pemba for the next 20 years. In addition, the project has led to knock-on interest in offshore rigs nearby, which, in turn, has led Gadhia to investigate diversifying into cargo helicopters to satisfy that niche.

“The gas companies are expecting to bring 20,000 people to the region and they will all have to go for rest and recreation every two months, so we may even look into the executive jet market for the movement of those personnel.”

“All this means that, technically, as well as carrying the personnel on a private jet, we could

be flying cargo from Houston to Nairobi, via one of our interline partners, then flying it on to Pemba on our own MD-83, and then connecting to a helicopter to take it out to the platform. We’re looking at the complete supply chain and adding value to the whole process,” he said.

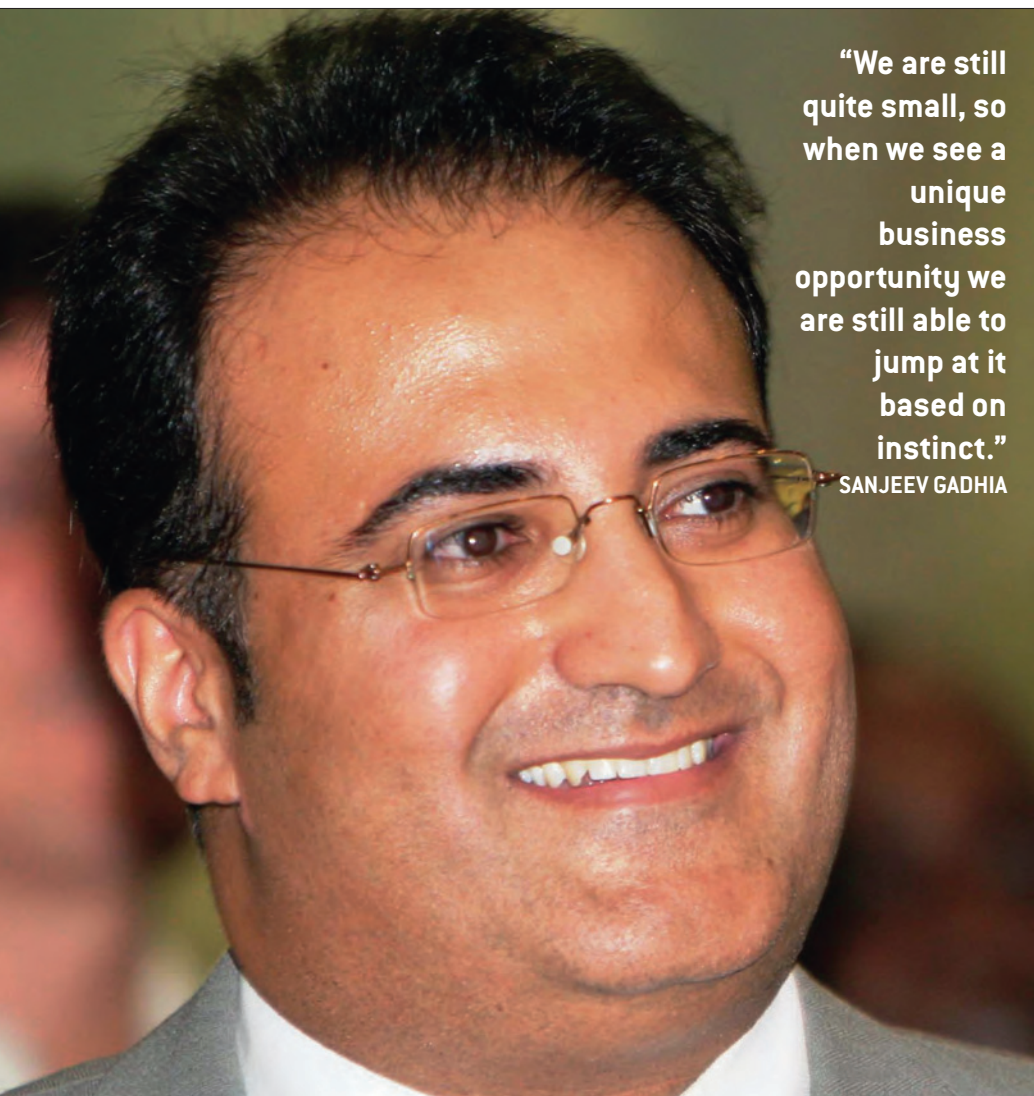
That project, Gadhia predicts, will lead to similar ones in east Africa. With all of the support flights and associated wealth drawn to the area, this will lead to an increase in flights overall to the region, although he suggests west Africa will remain dominant.



As well as oil and gas, Astral is also looking to Somalia, where the United Nations is putting together a new peace-keeping mission. “It’s not a landlocked country and it still has a fantastic port. With ocean piracy much reduced, we’re actually expecting to see a lot more sea shipments coming in along with more air shipments. It’s also only an hour-and-a-half flying time from Nairobi, so there will be lots of short-haul opportunities.”

Beyond these vast special projects, Gadhia is confident that Astral has a model that will continue to serve it well. Where other all-cargo operators have stopped, started and stopped again, Astral has flown continuously for 15 years.

Many non-African airlines also burnt their fingers by assuming they could fly throughout Africa themselves. They soon learned their lesson, and Astral is seeing those airlines coming back,



**“We are still quite small, so when we see a unique business opportunity we are still able to jump at it based on instinct.”**

**SANJEEV GADHIA**

and they are now a lot more interested in forming partnerships.

So far, Astral is using African partners such as Ethiopian, Royal Air Maroc and South African Airlines to fly cargo into some “unique points no one else can fly into”. West Africa remains a problem area, with only DHL Express as a potential partner, but partnering with an integrator brings with it a raft of problems. This is why, Gadhia said, should he accept the option for a second MD-83, it will be based in the region to create a hub-and-spoke network.

“We are intra-Africa; we have no plans to fly out of Africa. We know it very well. When we started Astral there were many non-African airlines that did not want to work with us because they felt they could go to the markets directly. Now they’ve learnt the hard way and we’re seeing more partnerships. Every airline coming into Nairobi is a potential partner.”

Astral has signed an MoU with Hainan Airlines Group (HNA) of China, which could potentially help the airline fund fleet and network growth.

“Hub and spoke in Africa is a tried and tested model for cargo, so the biggest problem is market

access,” Gadhia suggested. “When carriers try and fly directly to points that would be well served through a hub and without checking the two-way load factors, they soon see a lot of problems. They’ll fly there for two months, the demand won’t be there, they’ll have to drop their rates and [the service] soon fails. That’s no good for anyone.

“What you have to do, instead, is form partnerships with local airlines, either by interline agreements or codeshares. You have to be cautious and not rush into many destinations yourself. Turkish Airlines is moving into Africa too quickly and that’s dangerous. It’s taken Emirates 10 years to develop its African strategy and Turkish is trying to do the same in three years.”

Astral’s Nairobi hub provides it with a steady source of cargo. Kenya, itself, remains the largest exporter of flowers ex-Africa, along with fresh fruit, vegetables and fish, primarily to European supermarkets.

The market is expected to grow 10% from this year, said Gadhia, especially from September when it enters the high season. Across the continent, he said there was improvement in load factors as countries develop imports and exports.

## SOMMAIRE

# Astral Aviation fan du MD-83F

*Astral Aviation a commandé un MD-83 pour une conversion de transporteur de passagers à celui de cargo (avec une option sur deux autres avions) auprès de l’AEI. Sanjeev Gadhia, le propriétaire de cette compagnie 100% cargo, se sent pousser des ailes.*

**Tom Pleasant l’a rencontré pour aborder ses projets.**

Sanjeev Gadhia a expliqué au magazine African Aerospace qu’il existe une multitude de raisons de choisir le MD-83 pour le fret. Il permet à Astral Aviation de transporter 20 % de charge utile en plus que le DC-9 avec les mêmes coûts d’exploitation. Le MD-83 est aussi capable de voler plus loin en particulier avec des réservoirs auxiliaires.

C’est important car beaucoup de destinations n’ont pas toujours un approvisionnement régulier en carburant. Le MD-83 permet d’effectuer des vols aller-retour depuis Nairobi sans ravitaillement. Cette commande va donc renforcer la capacité de la compagnie de façon significative.

Les projets des industries pétrolières et gazières et la hausse de la consommation des classes moyennes en Afrique vont stimuler la croissance continue et le fret aérien sur le continent africain. Le plus grand projet gazier se situe au nord du Mozambique. Cette région est dépourvue d’infrastructures et c’est impossible d’opérer directement du fret aérien avec un Boeing 777F ou un B747F. Il faut passer via un hub, comme Nairobi ou Dar Es Salaam puis réexpédier la marchandise. Astral Aviation s’intéresse à ce type de projet.

« Quand vous êtes petit, vous avez la possibilité de faire parfois des affaires uniques, de fonctionner à l’instinct », souligne Sanjeev Gadhia.

Astral Aviation souhaite également prospecter en Somalie qui se trouve à une heure trente de vol de Nairobi. Le pays s’attend à davantage de livraisons maritimes avec des expéditions aériennes à la clé.

Astral Aviation compte s’inscrire dans la durée. Elle a noué des partenariats avec Ethiopian Airlines, Royal Air Maroc et South African Airways pour opérer du fret de point à point. Le hub de Nairobi permet également à Astral Aviation d’opérer une source continue de fret. Le Kenya reste le plus grand exportateur de fleurs d’Afrique et exporte des fruits frais, des légumes et du poisson vers l’Europe.

Selon Sanjeev Gadhia, Astral Aviation doit continuer à maintenir un réseau bien équilibré. La compagnie ne compte pas uniquement se focaliser sur les destinations à fort potentiel mais souhaite desservir celles qui en ont moins tout en répondant aux projets les plus audacieux.

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More than 400 airline and manufacturers' delegates attended the latest IATP conference in Hamburg.

# Sharing: the secret

It's every airline's nightmare: an aircraft goes unserviceable at an airport down-route, where the carrier does not have onsite engineering support.

A spare part or urgent maintenance is required to get the aircraft back in the air. But, with every airline today having an obsession with its bottom line, it is impossible for it to station engineers and a full inventory of spares at every point on its route network.

So, how does it avoid lengthy delays, irate passengers and the cost of urgently flying out spares or personnel?

The answer is an organisation that began operations more than 60 years ago but which, even today, is hardly known outside the airline industry. Yet it saves its members millions of dollars and innumerable hours of delay every year.

The International Airlines Technical Pool (IATP) came into existence in 1948 when a small number of European airlines committed to provide each other with reciprocal technical assistance, without financial settlement, if one of

*Alan Dron travels to Hamburg to find out why "going tech" is not the problem it used to be.*

their aircraft went "tech" (had a technical problem).

Today, with 102 full airline members and 32 associate members, IATP companies can be found all over the world. They include eight African and 15 Middle Eastern airlines (there is some overlap with north African members in those totals) that will come to the aid of airlines usually regarded as competitors. Remarkably, it remains a not-for-profit organisation, which agrees cost-sharing formulae with its members for the services it organises.

The IATP system is very simple: if a member's aircraft needs a spare part, it can borrow that

component from a fellow IATP member for 14 days, with a further seven-day period to return it.

There are formulae by which any costs are calculated and eventually billed to the airline. However, any costs to member airlines are considerably less than they would incur if they had to buy or transport the spares to a stranded aircraft.

In the summer 2013 season, for example, IATP members shared around \$190 million in spare parts and provided line maintenance pooling at more than 400 locations.

One major participant in IATP is Egyptair. A member since 1962, it operates maintenance services for foreign airlines within Cairo and can also call on fellow IATP members abroad when required.

This can be particularly important in areas of Africa, where MRO facilities are at a premium in several regions. "With IATP, if we're in the middle of nowhere, there's always a way to find someone," said Tarek Ghoneim, Egyptair

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Outside the main conference and negotiating sessions, delegates networked with colleagues and suppliers' representatives.

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Maintenance & Engineering's marketing and maintenance contract director. IATP, he said, has played a major role with Egyptair maintenance and will continue to do so into the future.

Third-party maintenance revenues became increasingly important during the Arab Spring and Egyptian Second Revolutions, when the political upheavals led to sharp downturns in inbound passenger traffic.

"We're always looking for more members," said Essam Hanafy, vice-president of IATP's board of directors, whose 'day job' is as the chairman's advisor for materials at Egyptair Maintenance & Engineering. Increasing the number of airlines means increasing the resources available to members, he said.



One of the most urgent calls for assistance comes when an aircraft suffers an undercarriage collapse or skids off a runway, perhaps sinking into soft ground. Airports need to have the aircraft removed as quickly as possible in order to restore operations.

Aircraft recovery kits – huge airbags that are wedged under the stricken aircraft's wings or fuselage and then inflated, plus recovery jacks and slings – typically cost \$1 million per set and are, thus, not held by every airline.

IATP members hold 12 of these recovery kits at strategic locations around the world. These can be flown quickly to the scene of an accident. The fee for providing this to fellow-IATP members is a modest \$500 daily (which pays for a supervising engineer to oversee the use of the kit) for up to seven days.

A non-IATP member airline can still call on the organisation's assistance in these

circumstances, but will have to pay an up-front charge of \$120,000 plus the cost of the engineer and a daily charge of \$6,000.

Having access to this type of recovery kit is vital. Airports need runways or taxiways to be cleared as quickly as possible and many now insist that airlines have a plan in place to get access to recovery equipment before they are allowed to start services.

IATP's activities cover four main areas: spare parts pooling, line maintenance pooling, equipment pooling, and aircraft recovery. Currently, the first two categories make up most of these activities, but IATP hopes to expand into training and base maintenance.

Within IATP there are 10 parts, maintenance or equipment pools, either covering a particular model of aircraft or types of ground equipment. There is also the aircraft recovery pool, mentioned above.

Currently, most types of jet airliners are covered. Significantly, IATP has a new target of supporting regional aircraft and talks are under way to bring Embraer and Bombardier aircraft within its responsibilities. This is likely to be particularly significant in Africa.

The IATP website also acts as an asset for members. Click on a station and it gives all the contact information for that location, together with a list of the spares that are available there.

## Face-to-face with the solution

**IATP members hold two conferences each year to conduct business before the start of airlines' summer and winter seasons. This provides a forum for the airlines' technical decision-makers to identify the most cost-effective support solutions for their airline.**

**Possibly the most important aspect, however, is networking between the representatives of the carriers that attend.**

**Creating and maintaining personal links between airlines' maintenance departments provides the essential contacts that enable urgent repairs to be carried out swiftly when an airliner goes unserviceable at a distant location.**

**At the most recent conference in Hamburg, airline representatives spoke of the benefits that IATP membership brings their respective companies.**

**Several delegates commented that, because of IATP, the airline maintenance community felt like a global family.**

**Here's what some of them had to say:**

■ **South African Airways: Danny Boulanger, project co-ordinator of IATP's board of directors, whose 'day job' is contract coordinator line stations.** "It's through this forum that we know each other. For example, a member airline had a 747 in Nairobi with leaking landing gear seals. Through our contacts, the managing director of a member airline contacted me, asking if we could assist. We had people on standby within 30 minutes and on a flight to Nairobi within a few hours. If it hadn't been for these contacts, it would have taken a lot longer to fix the problem."

■ **Libyan Airlines: Sadegh Lasebai, technical advisor.** "These meetings give an opportunity for Libyan Airlines to choose the right companies that can handle our aircraft throughout our network. We consult people at these meetings about technical affairs, especially spares and maintenance."

■ **Ethiopian Airlines: Zeweter Abebe, supervisor AOG desk.** "There's no doubt about it, it develops relationships between individuals that really speed up responses on AOG days."



# LCCS HAVE THE BELLY FOR CARGO...

In an unusual move for a low-cost carrier (LCC), Tanzania's FastJet last year partnered with BidAir Cargo to start carrying airfreight on its fleet of Airbus 319s. **Tom Pleasant** reports.

According to Richard Bodin, FastJet chief commercial officer, cargo revenue rates per kilo in Africa are some of the highest in the world.

This is because of the challenges presented by poor road and rail infrastructure.

"It means carrying cargo by air is often the most efficient choice," he said.

LCCs are usually not interested in developing cargo, as their business model requires fast turnarounds and plenty of luggage space for passengers, both of which sometimes come under threat from cargo. However, some LCCs have shown this does not have to be the case. Malaysia's AirAsia X, for example, posted a cargo revenue of \$27.42 million in 2013 and FastJet's sister airline, EasyJet, is also building its portfolio.

Stelios Haji-Ioannou, founder of European budget airline EasyJet, established FastJet in 2011 with the aim of it becoming a pan-African LCC. EasyJet has shown carrying cargo is not a limitation to the LCC model, so FastJet's move is not a foolish one.

Under the agreement with BidAir, FastJet only



Airlines often put cargo in the belly of passenger jets.

provides the belly capacity, rather than involving itself with any of the logistics. BidAir, as a general sales and service agent, takes on the actual sale, handling and costs of transporting the cargo.

Vincent Banda, BidAir Cargo director Africa, said the model is a replica of one already tried and tested by the company in South Africa, Uganda and Zambia.

"We have been in Tanzania since 2008 working with Precision Air. We used their belly capacity to fly our cargo around domestically and regionally. That was going fantastically well until, unfortunately, they downsized their aircraft from 737s to ATR 42s and 72s. The contract we have signed with FastJet is replacing a lot of that lost capacity."

Banda said the risk of other changes in capacity was just another reason why BidAir Cargo is determined to develop a network of cargo-friendly airlines to ensure capacity remains secure and stable.

"The airfreight industry in Africa is quite complicated, in that we don't have many dedicated cargo airlines," he said. "I think that is because of the operational costs: many of them come in, but not all last. They just cannot sustain themselves.

"That means we have to rely on flying cargo in the belly holds of local passenger airlines. In the past few years, though, we have seen a lot of those airlines taking a knock, then coming back up, then going down again. That has caused a lot of instability for airfreight. There are some [local airlines] that are still hanging in there and offering cargo capacity, so we are doing the best we can with what we have.

"Freight still needs to be moved, so you have to find alternative means. While the road networks have taken precedence in that respect, there are delays when you use them. That makes demand for airfreight still strong."

Not only is demand huge, it is also growing, thanks to Africa's massive amounts of mining and construction, and its growing political stability. Balancing that demand with what is available in a reliable, sustainable way is challenging. BidAir's method is to use multiple airlines.

"A shipper does not really care what airline carries their cargo. They want to know it will reach its destination and that it will be looked after. To ensure that, we are creating a distributed network because we realised that using just one airline does not give the service required," Banda said.



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# ETHIOPIAN'S MARATHON

Ethiopian now has engineers helping various other African airlines to maintain their aircraft and engines.

*Continuing investment means that Ethiopian Airlines' market-leading MRO is starting to leave the competition behind.*

**Martin Ferguson reports from Addis Ababa.**

**E**thiopians are renowned for their stamina and resilience. In the last 50 years, the east African nation has produced almost 200 Olympic runners. Between stepping off the aircraft at Addis Ababa Airport and arriving at the InterContinental Hotel in the city centre, you can see more than two-dozen images of the country's most iconic figure – the recently retired Haile Gebrselassie, who won two Olympic and four World Championship gold medals during a glittering career. He is a daily inspiration for millions.

“He was a special athlete, but he is a product of Ethiopian culture and society; work hard, be patient and results will come,” a young engineer at the Ethiopian Airlines' maintenance plant commented.

Planning, preparation and the ability to stay the distance – which for many simply means surviving – are part of the country's DNA.

Ethiopian Airlines has embarked on its own long-distance journey. In 2010 it launched its 'vision 2025' project, which aims to turn the

carrier from a \$1 billion to a \$10 billion business over a 15-year period.

To achieve such ambitious growth, chief executive Tewolde Gebremariam says the airline will have to establish four African hubs (in the north, south, east and west of the continent), and increase the fleet to 120 aircraft to carry 18 million passengers a year to 90 international destinations. Underpinning the initiative is a massive training and recruitment project that will rocket head count across the business from 7,000 to 17,000 – a mammoth task by anyone's standards.

Ethiopian's maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) operation is already the envy of the industry across Africa. Not resting on its laurels, and recognising the importance of MRO to the rest of the business and the vision 2025 project, the airline is investing millions in equipment, infrastructure and manpower.

Zemene Nega, the division's managing director, says these are exciting times but admits the biggest challenge is keeping pace with growth. “The last two years

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have been particularly testing,” he said. “Manpower was lean and we didn’t have much additional resource for our third-party work, so we started to train a lot more people. We introduced development and coaching programmes for new interns and students at every level of our training academy. After passing the rigorous preparation they are deployed to work on aircraft.”

At present, Ethiopian’s MRO headcount is almost 2,500, which includes 1,800 engineers and technicians. But, as more new planes are delivered, and as its already lucrative third-party business grows, the need for talent will be overwhelming. Over the past three years \$80 million has been invested to upgrade the Ethiopian Aviation Academy’s intake to 1,000 trainees per year. And they’re obviously doing something right; the academy recently won the airline training services award from the African Airlines Association (AFRAA). By 2025 the number of annual graduates is expected to reach 4,000.

But just what will these graduates be servicing?

At the moment Ethiopian’s fleet consists of 62 aircraft. Long-haul passenger services are operated by 12 Boeing 767-300ERs, six 777-200LRs and two 777-300ERs. For medium-range passenger services there are four 757-200ERs, five 737-700s and nine 737-800s, six of which have the Sky Interior. Thirteen Bombardier Q400 NextGen turboprop aircraft service domestic and regional routes.



For cargo and non-scheduled services there are two 777-222Fs, two 757-260Fs and two MD-11 freighters. In addition there are, of course, five brand new Boeing 787 Dreamliners servicing Ethiopian’s most profitable long-haul routes. And the order book is ample, too. On the commercial side, the airline will take delivery of eight more 787s, two 777-300ERs, five 737-800s and 14 of the new Airbus A350-900 aircraft. Another four 777-200Fs will be added to the cargo fleet.

Nega, who joined the company as a graduate engineer three decades ago, says the airline’s ability to provide total MRO to its fleet is one of the main reasons it stays ahead of the competition in Africa. “We do all A through to C checks on our Boeing fleet, starting from the 737 all the way up to the 787. And the same goes for our Bombardier aircraft as well. The 787 is so new there has not yet been a C check but this should happen in the coming years.”

Nega says the airline’s modification capability is growing stronger, particularly in the area of the installation of avionic equipment. Structural repair capability, both for the conventional metal structure and composite, also falls within the company skill set.

“We have modular maintenance capability on some engines and overall capability on the others. With the modules, we split the engines down and send parts abroad before getting them



**Ethiopian is investing heavily in training engineers to help it secure third-party maintenance business.**

back, putting them together, testing and sending back into service,” he said.

“On the CFM 56-3 and -7 [engines powering Boeing 737s] we have just completed our own capability and have now started overhauling these engines, both for third-party customers and ourselves.”

The airline also has complete overall capability on the Honeywell 331-200 auxiliary power units on the 767 and 757.

Furthermore, it is an authorised service centre for Bombardier, with which it has close ties and an “excellent” working relationship. “We have been heralded by Bombardier three times for being the most reliable carrier in the region. We were audited and approved to become one of its authorised service centres for Q100, 200, 300 and 400 aircraft. There are a lot of these in east Africa and many airlines still get them serviced in Europe. We want to keep that business here,” said Nega.

The airline’s test capability is substantial, with three cells onsite and more to come. The biggest handles up to 100,000lbs of thrust. The turboprop cells handle engines up to 2,500 and 5,000 shaft horsepower.

The airline also provides complete airframe maintenance on the Boeing MD11, 777, 767, 757 and 737, as well as on the Fokker F-50 and the Diamond DA 40 and 42 single-engined and twin-engined trainers.

Aircraft interior reconditioning and the stripping and painting of aircraft are growing segments of the operation.

With all the proposed growth on the airfield, the obvious question is whether there will be enough space to accommodate the new staff, equipment and aircraft?

“We are building three new hangars,” Nega revealed. “One is a dedicated maintenance

hangar that will be big enough to accommodate a Boeing 747. The second is a fully equipped paint hangar, which may also be used for lighter checks.” Construction of the first two hangars is scheduled to begin this year, with work on the \$100 million project being carried out by a Chinese firm.

Nega said the third large hangar would be for maintenance only, and should be complete within a year.

Demand for space is at a premium, such is the success of Ethiopian’s third-party business. Around the time of my visit, C checks were being carried out on aircraft belonging to Angolan Airlines, Camair (Cameroon Airlines), Mozambique Airlines and Asky (Ethiopian’s Togo-based subsidiary).

Regular business comes from more than 20 carriers throughout Africa and the Middle East. “We have a great many customers and it is growing,” said Nega.

But Ethiopian doesn’t just provide MRO on the ground in Addis. Many of its engineers and technicians are onsite with some bigger customers. “We have 22 employees based in Togo to provide a total care programme, including maintenance, parts and checks, for Asky,” explained Nega. “We have a similar arrangement with Camair, where we have a dozen people supporting their 737 and 767, and we have taken over maintenance of Rwandan Air for its 737 and new Q400s.”



Ethiopian is also the MRO provider for Malawian Airlines’ Q400s, and is assisting Cabo Verde Airlines and Mozambique at their bases.

A deal to maintain a 777 and 767 for the government in Equatorial Guinea means the airline is also dipping its toes into the VIP aircraft market. Nega said the total care programmes for VIPs are good business, though the company wants to concentrate on airliners.

While it would be disingenuous to describe the African aviation market as buoyant, it is without question going through a period of sustained growth. So, as carriers jockey for position in the commercial and cargo spaces, is there any real MRO competition for Ethiopian?

Not at the moment, it would seem, said Nega. “Look to the north, Egypt has a very good extensive facility, but I think they are focusing on their own fleet and not on third-party. The market is limited in Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. If you go south there is South African Airways, SAA Technical, which does some things. Kenya Airways does its own checks but not third-party.”

Nega added that he couldn’t see any threat from Arik Air in Nigeria, as it was many years away from being able to develop third-party MRO.

“The major player at the moment is Ethiopian Airlines and I can’t see that changing,” he concluded.



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*Ethiopian Airlines is one of the fastest growing airlines in Africa. Now, prompted by the flag-carrier's success, the Ethiopian Government wants to develop the airport infrastructure and turn Addis Ababa into a regional hub. **Kaleyesus Bekele** reports.*

# BOLE POSITION

«Bole en pole position» – Page 102

**E**thiopian Airlines is acquiring new aircraft, while also investing in its MRO capabilities, cargo terminal and aviation training school.

The national flag-carrier is also expanding its network and fleet; on average, it takes delivery of 10 aircraft every year. The airline is growing at a rate of 20% annually.

To cope with this growth the Ethiopian Airports Enterprise is building new airports and expanding the existing facilities in Addis Ababa and regional towns.

Recently, the Enterprise unveiled its plan to expand Addis Ababa Bole International Airport's passenger terminal and build a new mega hub (international airport) out of the capital city.

Ethiopian Airports Enterprise CEO, Tewodros Dawit, said it is going to undertake a \$250 million expansion at the Bole International Airport passenger terminal.

He added that, in line with the Ethiopian Airlines 'vision 2025' development strategy – a 15-year development road map – the Enterprise is undertaking various airport development projects. Addis Ababa Bole is one of them.

According to Dawit, the project includes the construction of a new passenger terminal as an extension of the existing terminal 1 (domestic and



Ethiopia has a "super-Bole" airport firmly in its sights as the "Gateway to Africa", with three possible locations identified.

regional) and terminal 2 (international) with all related equipment, and the construction of a new VIP terminal.

The new facility will house boarding areas, lounges, recreation centres, shopping malls, offices and other facilities. New boarding gates, boarding bridges and parking areas are part of the expansion.

The other major component of the project is the VIP terminal.

The first of its type in Ethiopia, the VIP terminal will be dedicated for leaders, senior government officials, diplomats and other dignitaries. It will have various saloons, lounges, conference rooms, recreation centres, duty free shops, an IT centre, and an exclusive parking area.

Dawit said a \$250 million loan had been secured from the Chinese Government; an agreement was signed by the Ethiopian Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. Chinese construction firm, CCCC, will be the project contractor. EXIM Bank of China will provide the loan.

A Singapore company, CPG Airports Architects, has been drafted in to design the new terminal. According to Dawit, the final design

will be completed and work will begin soon. The project is expected to be completed within three years.

Addis Ababa Bole International Airport handles more than 150 flights per day with its two terminals.

Terminal 2, commonly known as the "new terminal", was built some 10 years ago. It was designed to accommodate 5 million passengers per year, but today it is handling more than 6 million.

Terminal 1, commonly called the "old terminal", accommodates 500,000 passengers per year.



Ten years ago only 900,000 passengers a year used the Bole airport but, over the decade, traffic has grown 25% year-on-year.

The Ethiopian Airport Enterprise has already renovated the domestic terminal and started to accommodate passengers en route to regional destinations there, thus helping to mitigate the congestion at the international terminal.

When the planned expansion work is finished Addis Ababa Bole International will be capable of

handling up to 25 million passengers per year. "We expect the passenger traffic to reach 22 million by 2025," Dawit said.

"Addis Ababa is a gateway to Africa. We are close to Europe, the Middle East and the Far East. So we want to link Africa to these regions. Ethiopian Airlines is the leading airline in Africa and it is playing a great role in connecting Africa with the rest of the world [so] we want to have airports that can accommodate the growing demand."

The Ethiopian Airport Enterprise has already put out an international tender to hire a consultant to supervise the construction work. It is also making preparations to build another international airport to handle long-haul flights away from Addis Ababa.

The planned airport is said to be the country's biggest and the consultant supervising the Addis Ababa Bole expansion will also produce a study on the new airport.

It is intended that he (or she) will undertake feasibility, technical, and financial studies, as well as producing an airport master plan.

The consultant will be tasked with studying the integration of

Continued  
on Page 102



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Bole International Airport with the new mega hub.

It is understood that five companies are bidding for the new mega hub contract and that three possible locations have been identified near the towns of Modjo, Teji and Dukem.

One aviation expert said the Ethiopian Airports Enterprise wants to build the airport in a lowland area where jetliners use less fuel during take off. "Less fuel means the aircraft can take more load," the expert said. "Modjo is ideal for the planned new mega hub because of the low altitude. However, the remoteness of the site to the capital and the absence of convenient public transport is an issue to be addressed," he added.



Modjo is 80km south-east of Addis Ababa, whereas Dukem is 34km east and Teji is only 30km south-west of the capital. Dukem and Teji, although closer, have similar altitudes to Addis Ababa – 7,546 feet (2,300 metres).

According to Dawit, the enterprise has now asked the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for technical assistance on the site selection.

According to the Enterprise, the mega hub will be used to handle long-haul flights, while Bole will handle domestic, regional and general aviation services.

**SOMMAIRE**

## Bole en pole position

*La croissance rapide d'Ethiopian Airlines a conforté le gouvernement éthiopien dans sa volonté de développer une nouvelle infrastructure aéroportuaire pour faire d'Addis-Abeba un véritable hub régional. Une enquête de notre correspondant, Kalesus Bekele.*

**Ethiopian Airlines est l'une des compagnies les plus dynamiques en Afrique. Elle investit dans de nouveaux avions, ses capacités de MRO, le fret ou encore une école de formation.**

**Pour accompagner cette croissance, les autorités éthiopiennes ont annoncé un plan d'expansion de l'aéroport international de Bole à Addis-Abeba. Il est estimé à 250 millions de dollars. Tewodros Dawit, directeur des aéroports éthiopiens, a mis en place une feuille de route en ce sens.**

**Ce projet, qui comprend la construction d'un nouveau terminal de passagers, a pour composante majeure la construction d'un terminal VIP. Un accord de financement a été signé avec la Chine via l'EXIM Bank of China. L'entreprise chinoise CCCC sera le maître d'œuvre du projet et la société Singapourienne CPG Airports Architects sera en charge de la conception.**

**L'aéroport international Bole d'Addis-Abeba gère aujourd'hui plus de 150 vols par jour. Il accueille aujourd'hui 6,5 millions de passagers, surpassant sa capacité optimale de 5 millions. A terme, il sera capable d'accueillir jusqu'à 25 millions de passagers par an.**

**« Le trafic de passagers pourra atteindre 22 millions d'ici 2025 », souligne Tewodros Dawit. « Addis Abeba est une porte d'entrée sur le continent. Nous souhaitons relier l'Afrique à des régions proches comme l'Europe, le Moyen-Orient et l'Extrême-Orient. »**

**Les autorités éthiopiennes comptent également entreprendre une étude sur la construction d'un nouvel aéroport international. Trois emplacements ont été identifiés près des villes de Modjo, Teji et Dukem. Selon Tewodros Dawit, une assistance technique a été demandée à l'OACI concernant le choix du site. La firme de consultant choisie devra également mener une étude sur un projet de mega hub auquel serait intégré l'aéroport de Bole.**

**Le transport aérien en Ethiopie connaît donc une croissance soutenue. L'inauguration de l'aéroport de Semera en novembre dernier en est une belle illustration. Le pays s'attend également à inaugurer cette année deux nouveaux aéroports dans les villes de Jimma et Assosa.**





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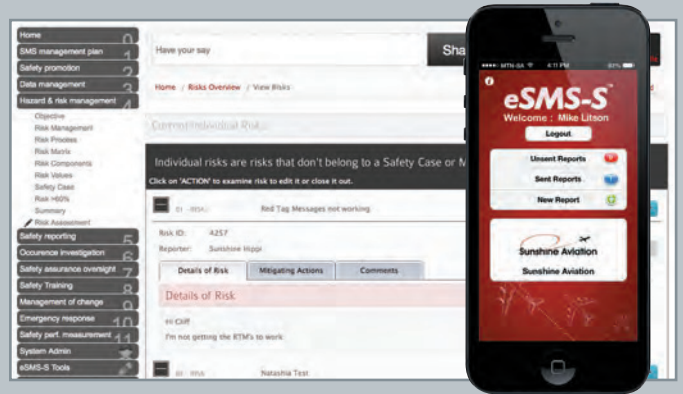
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*Ali Tounsi, secrétaire général d'Airport Council International en Afrique, était à l'île Maurice pour le démarrage du programme APEX de l'aéroport international SSR Ramgoolam. Il partage avec nous sa vision sur la sécurité des aéroports en Afrique et souligne les initiatives de l'ACI sur le continent. Une enquête de Vincent Chappard.*

# La sécurité aéroportuaire à la traîne en Afrique

«Africa lagging behind on airport security» – Page 106

**L**a sécurité est un dossier complexe et demeure un enjeu majeur en Afrique selon l'association Airport Council International (ACI).

Sur les 47 pays africains qui ont été audités, de nombreux états n'étaient pas capables d'établir une structure et un cadre nécessaires pour la mise en place d'un système de surveillance et de sécurité efficace et durable.

Ils n'avaient également pas la capacité et les ressources requises pour certifier les exploitants d'aéroports, les aéronefs de même que les organismes de navigabilité conformément aux exigences actuelles de la réglementation.

« Il y a un réel manque de moyens, de connaissances, de formations liés au monde aéroportuaire en Afrique pour assurer le respect des règles », constate Ali Tounsi, secrétaire général d'ACI Afrique.

Selon l'ACI, les statistiques sur la sécurité des aéroports restent mauvaises.

L'Afrique a enregistré le taux le plus élevé d'accidents, soit une moyenne de 4,5 accidents par million de départs pour la période 2003-2007, par rapport aux autres continents. Par



**Ali Tounsi: « Il y a un réel manque de moyens, de connaissances, de formations liés au monde aéroportuaire en Afrique pour assurer le respect des règles. »**

ailleurs, malgré les énormes disparités existant en Afrique, le niveau de sécurité reste bon pour les aéroports d'Afrique du sud, d'Afrique du nord ou encore de l'île Maurice ou des Seychelles.

Les facteurs de risques sont nombreux au sein de la zone aéroportuaire.

On répertorie les problèmes liés à la piste (construction, maintenance, friction, etc...), une mauvaise évaluation des obstacles dans les zones de sécurité d'extrémité de piste (RESA) ou encore des marquages de pistes qui sont incorrects ou illisibles.

Il faut souligner également que les rapports sur l'état des pistes sont souvent inexacts ou obsolètes, qu'il n'y a pas de fermeture de piste lorsque les conditions l'exigent et relève un défaut d'utilisation du vent préférentiel pour les pistes ainsi qu'une gestion approximative du péril animalier ou des FOD.

Pour pallier ce manque de sécurité, l'ACI mène de nombreuses initiatives et de programmes dédiés aux aéroports.

L'ACI leur fournit de l'aide, de l'expertise et des formations pour améliorer leur sécurité. Ils doivent

Continuer à la page 106

ACI's APEX certification has been granted to Lusaka in Zambia (bottom left) and Lomé in Togo (right), with Maputo in Mozambique and Nouakchott in Mauritania in the pipeline. Main picture: the new terminal at Mauritius International Airport.



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cependant faire des efforts sur l'aspect réglementaire où les autorités de l'aviation doivent accorder plus d'importance à la sécurité et à la surveillance, avec notamment plus de contrôle sur les aéroports, les compagnies aériennes et organismes de contrôle.

Les autorités gouvernementales doivent aussi exiger que les opérateurs soient bien contrôlés et audités régulièrement.

Il faut également mettre les moyens humains et financiers pour accroître la formation et améliorer les infrastructures pour mieux répondre aux normes de l'OACI.

Selon Ali Tounsi, l'entraide entre les aéroports est un moyen efficace d'y parvenir.



Le programme APEX a justement pour objectif de faciliter ce processus. L'aéroport hôte bénéficie ainsi de l'aide d'experts et d'une vision extérieure. Cela permet aussi un échange et une diffusion d'expériences dans le domaine de la sécurité et de la sûreté des aéroports.

« Souvent de nombreuses personnes ne savent pas comment procéder et trouver des solutions. L'ACI intervient alors, réalise un audit, propose des solutions et des formations sur mesure », explique Ali Tounsi.

Il est important de rappeler que l'OACI exige que les aéroports soient certifiés. Il incombe à la direction de l'aviation civile de chaque pays de statuer s'ils sont conformes ou non.

## L'ACI en Afrique

**Le Conseil International des Aéroports (ACI) est une association mondiale à but non lucratif qui regroupe des aéroports.**

**Elle a pour mission de défendre les intérêts des aéroports et de promouvoir l'excellence dans la gestion et l'exploitation aéroportuaire.**

**En Afrique, l'ACI représente 56 membres et plus de 200 aéroports répartis sur 47 pays.**

**Elle représente les exploitants d'aéroports africains, membres de l'ACI auprès des organisations gouvernementales et régionales, qui sont soutenus par des comités spécialisés et des groupes de travail.**

**Les membres ont accès à d'importantes publications et à des banques de données.**

**Ils ont la possibilité de participer au travail des comités permanents mondiaux dans les domaines tels que l'environnement, l'économie, la facilitation, la sûreté et la technique.**

**Les membres en Afrique peuvent également se joindre à des visites spéciales d'études ainsi qu'à d'autres programmes de soutien tels que le fond ACI et le programme de jumelage des aéroports.**



Le classement de la sécurité des aéroports est désormais rendu public par l'OACI, ce qui peut être préjudiciable pour un pays misant énormément par exemple sur le tourisme.

« Nous allons poursuivre le programme APEX qui apporte de très bons résultats », affirme Ali Tounsi. « Les aéroports de Lomé (Togo) et de Lusaka (Zambie) sont certifiés, ceux de Maputo (Mozambique) et de Nouakchott (Mauritanie) sont en cours. L'expertise de l'ACI permet de faire un grand pas en avant et de gagner environ 2 à 3 années de travail dans le processus de certification d'un aéroport selon les normes de l'OACI. »

L'ACI propose également d'autres programmes à ses membres pour améliorer la sécurité et sûreté des petits aéroports africains à travers la diffusion de meilleures pratiques dans ce domaine. L'association met également en place des groupes de travail d'experts pour la recherche et le développement et défend les intérêts des aéroports.

La sécurité des aéroports doit demeurer une priorité, en particulier par rapport à l'évolution du transport aérien pour les prochaines décennies. Les statistiques du trafic mondial indiquent que 5,6 milliards de passagers ont été enregistrés en 2012 avec une croissance de 6,1% pour l'Afrique. Selon les estimations de l'OACI, ce chiffre pourrait atteindre 11 milliards de passagers en 2029.

### SUMMARY

# Africa lagging behind on airport security

*Ali Tounsi, secretary general of Airport Council International in Africa, was in Mauritius for its APEX program launch and shared his vision on African airport security. Vincent Chappard reports.*

Security is a complex issue and remains a major challenge in Africa, according to Airports Council International (ACI).

Of the 47 African countries audited by the global non-profit organisation, many were not able to establish a structure and framework necessary for the implementation of a monitoring system for effective and sustainable security.

Neither did they have the resources required to certify airport operators and monitor aircraft airworthiness in accordance with current regulatory requirements.

According to ACI, statistics on airport security remain poor. Africa has the highest accident rate, an average of 4.5 accidents per million departures for the period 2003-2007, compared to other continents.

Moreover, huge disparities exist on the continent, with the level of safety only being good for South

African airports, north Africa, Mauritius and the Seychelles.

To overcome this lack of security, ACI has numerous initiatives and programmes dedicated to airports. It provides assistance, expertise and training but countries also need to make efforts on regulatory aspects, where aviation authorities need to pay more attention to security and surveillance, including more control over airports, airlines and regulators.

Government authorities must also require that operators are well controlled and audited regularly. It is a necessary human and financial resources to increase training and improve infrastructure to better meet ICAO standards.

According to Tounsi, mutual exchanges between airports represented an effective way to achieve this. The APEX programme is specifically intended to facilitate this process, offering the help of experts and a broad vision, plus facilitation of exchanges and

dissemination of experiences.

Although ICAO requires that airports are certified, it is up to those managing and overseeing civil aviation in each country to decide whether they comply. The classification of airport security is now published by ICAO, which can have a detrimental effect on a country relying greatly on tourism, for example, offering an incentive to improve.

"We will continue the APEX programme as it provides very good results," said Tounsi. "The airports at Lomé [Togo] and Lusaka [Zambia] are certified, and those in Maputo [Mozambique] and Nouakchott [Mauritania] are under way."

ACI believes that airport security should remain a priority in Africa, particularly as the industry grows. Global traffic statistics indicate that 5.6 billion passengers were recorded in 2012, with a growth of 6.1% for Africa. According to ICAO estimates, this figure could reach 11 billion passengers by 2029.

African airlines are advised to try something different, and remember the sense of taste is dulled in flight.



*African airlines need to improve their global culinary offerings but, asks Barbara Cockburn, is anyone doing anything about it?*

## A spoonful of Africa, sir?

**W**hy are there very few examples of typical local food on African airline flights and does anyone even know what makes a typical African dish?

Many industry experts have suggested that African food doesn't travel well, doesn't look great on a tray and is unpalatable to Western tastes when set against the food that other international airlines serve their passengers.

However, they also believe that the lack of African food served on board should change and that there is a perfect opportunity for airlines to rethink their catering options if they are to market themselves to international travellers.

One expert suggested that African food is something he would seek out on the local high street, but in flight it is nowhere near the same quality.

Jeremy Clark, project coordinator at Addis Ababa-based in-flight kitchen Addis International Catering, has few words of

excitement about African food options.

He said: "The African market is quite interesting. It's far and away different to the other major markets of the world. Customer service is quite a challenge for them. They're struggling to address the needs of the passengers."

"The Asian nations are very naturally hospitable; think of the Singapore girl and the Thai attendant. The Africans really struggle with this idea – probably because there's a lot of pride among African nations."

In his experience in catering for African airlines and other international carriers, for example from the Middle East, he noted: "The airlines tend to compete with each other, rather than against the African carriers."

This healthy competition that is lacking among African carriers makes it "a very strange market all together".

"African airlines have to catch up with the rest

of the world to improve how they're perceived internationally," he advised.

"All of them have old fashioned design and service concepts, and the types of menus and food quality is still back in the 1990s."

In Clark's opinion, African food doesn't lend itself very well to in-flight catering. "It's rustic and basic, with no finesse to a lot of it. And it's not very good to reheat or place nicely in a dish. You tend to get food with an African flavour rather than an actual dish itself."

Typical African flavours include herbs and spices. In the east, he said that clove, chilli and cinnamon are commonly used. "They eat a lot of chick peas and other pulses, meats like goat, lamb, and chicken. In South Africa they eat a lot of beef and far less goat. In the west you'd find lots of chicken, and fish, such as Nile per..."

Clark talked about the techniques used in butchery and said that the better cuts of meat

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were not really understood by African caterers. “The western style of cutting or butchering fish or meat is not applicable in Africa but you have to apply it in airline catering because you have to portion dishes. Passengers don’t want to fish out bones. There’s certainly a lot of east meets west in African catering for airlines.”

South African Airlines (SAA) is taking its standing in the in-flight meal stakes seriously. According to a spokesperson it serves locally inspired cuisine. One typical dish is a beef fillet with grilled mielie pap, a traditional porridge made from mielie meal, which is a staple in South Africa, served with corn cake.

For its premium class passengers it works with renowned chefs from South Africa, including Masterchef SA judge Benny Masekwameng, who is also executive chef at hotel group Tsogo Sun, and Rueben Riffel, who runs the popular Reuben’s restaurant in Franschoek in the Western Cape.

Such investment in its culinary offerings granted SAA honorary membership to the South African Chefs’ Association.

Nikos Loukas, founder of the inflightfeed.com blog, hasn’t been impressed with many African airlines’ catering options. “It’s not that African food is unpalatable. I’d go out for it in my home town because it’s a bit of a delicacy, but when it comes to airline food, they just haven’t mastered it yet. They can’t deliver in the air what’s on the ground. African flight catering is so under-developed. It’s not something that’s really been looked at,” he said.

Low-cost airline Kulula has done something different for passengers that pay for everything on board. Loukas applauded the effort and said the carrier “thinks outside the box”.

The airline uploaded a fun video on social media showing crew having a braai in the sky, in a hot air balloon. Braai is Afrikaans for barbecue and is a social custom in South Africa. Passengers were served braai straight from the flames on to their tray. And it promised: “Going forward, our customers will be able to select their favourite meat or veggie skewer and have it braaied in the sky.”

Gate Gourmet is the world’s largest in-flight caterer.

## The world is your oyster on a private jet

**The corporate jet market is a very different beast to the airline market because you can employ caterers to prepare whatever food you want, according to Dietmar Duller, founder and course leader of training solutions for corporate flight attendants.**

**“Catering choices purely depend on the client. Passengers on charter flights tend to enjoy fine dining and stay in luxury hotels.**

**“Being on a private jet is like being at home away from home. They want food served on expensive china and to drink expensive wines. Some will have food brought to them from their private homes or palaces or favourite restaurants.”**

**The flight attendants have a profile of their clients’ catering likes and dislikes and this allows them to plan meals accordingly. Hospitality is a very important part of that. “Catering is so important and flight attendants must never be short of food to serve,” said Duller.**

**There must always be a back-up plan for short notice itinerary changes.**

**“If you fly to northern Africa the cuisine is similar to Europe, with some Arabian influences too, and is readily available,” said Duller. “South Africa is also no challenge, but the type of food available in Africa’s more remote destinations can really only be bought from local supermarkets or hotels in that area. Flight attendants need to have a back-up, which allows them to serve food on board.”**

flavours were more intense.

A fun fact was posted on the airline’s Facebook page: “Did you know that food tastes different on an airplane? As the plane goes higher, the change in air pressure numbs about a third of our taste buds.”

Having flown business class on Air Uganda, Loukas discovered passengers were given the opportunity to choose the ingredients for their perfect sandwich and salad. And in economy class it has biodegradable packaging as part of its carbon offsetting programme.

“These are really innovative moves and not



It also invited a chef on board from spice firm Robertsons Spices.

Passengers were treated to a free meal, as a taste testing session. The chef explained the meal he was preparing would taste different in flight to on the ground and this was the reason in-flight

something you’d expect to be coming out of Africa,” he said.

The other main African airlines have done little to impress Loukas.

“Some airlines use food to differentiate themselves from others and you can see which airlines don’t really care,” he said.

“The in-flight catering industry in Africa is in its infancy and there is so much opportunity from a marketing point of view. Look, if you offer something really memorable people will remember you and come back and fly with you.”

African airlines can improve by looking at Chinese airlines, he suggested.

“Chinese airlines aren’t known for their food either, but in first and business class a couple of them have properly trained tea masters and they do a tea ceremony for you, which is a really nice touch.

“Maybe if the airlines in Africa looked within themselves, at their culture, relevant to their country, they could come up with something, like an awesome welcoming home or welcome to our country.”



## Servair extends Kenyan catering contract

Kenya Airways has offered a five year extension of its catering supply contract to Servair, the French-owned catering operator.

In 2010, Servair became the reference shareholder of NAS, catering supplier to the Kenyan company for 36 years. Today, NAS Servair provides catering services to the 70 Kenya Airways flights departing daily from Nairobi and Mombasa, representing 8500 in-flight meals per day.

NAS Servair has just obtained its ISO 22000 certification for food safety control from SGS.

"We are pleased that Kenya Airways is continuing to place its trust in us and proud to provide our customers with high-quality services that meet their expectations," says Denis Hasdenteufel, Executive VP, Servair Europe, the Middle East & Africa.

"The relationship between Kenya Airways and NAS Servair was built on a true spirit of partnership, and competition will not change that," added Capt. Paul Mwangi, Kenya Airways Flight Operations Director.

The formal contract signing was attended by



**TASTY DEAL:** Capt. Paul Mwangi and Denis Hasdenteufel agree the new catering extension.

Capt. Paul Mwangi, Kenya Airways Flight Operations Director, Chris Oanda, Kenya Airways Head of Supply Chain, Denis Hasdenteufel, Executive VP, Servair Europe, the Middle East & Africa and Eric Rouvillois, NAS Servair Managing Director.

Operating in Africa since 1989, Servair has progressively emerged on the continent as a major player in airline catering. It currently operates twenty catering units in Africa in compliance with both international standards and local protocols.

## SOMMAIRE

# Saveurs d'Afrique

*Comment les compagnies aériennes africaines peuvent-elles améliorer leur standing dans le secteur de la restauration en vol ? Les voyageurs savent-ils ce qu'est un plat typique africain ?*

De nombreux experts estiment que les mets africains ne voyagent pas de façon optimale, qu'ils ne sont pas adaptés aux goûts des voyageurs occidentaux et que leur présentation ne semblent pas assez esthétique. C'est donc une opportunité pour réinventer la restauration en vol.

« Le service aux clients reste un défi et les compagnies du continent s'organisent pour répondre aux besoins des passagers », affirme Jeremy Clark, coordinateur du projet de restauration à l'aéroport d'Addis-Abeba.

Ce marché est intéressant mais il souffre d'une concurrence pas assez saine et d'une image tronquée à l'échelle internationale. Selon Jeremy Clark, la restauration en vol demeure encore rustique et peu recherchée. Les plats dont la conception date des années 90 ne peuvent pas être réchauffés ou présentés délicatement. Ils ont une saveur africaine au lieu d'être des plats à part entière.

Nikos Loukas, fondateur du blog Inflightfeed.com, n'a pas été séduit par les options proposées par de nombreuses compagnies aériennes africaines. « Cela ne veut pas dire que la cuisine africaine n'est pas savoureuse. Elles n'ont pas encore maîtrisé la restauration en vol et ne peuvent donc pas proposer la qualité présente dans les plats au sol. »

Il existe cependant de nombreuses initiatives innovantes pour développer ce secteur. La compagnie Kulula diffuse ainsi une vidéo amusante sur les médias sociaux montrant l'équipage préparant un "braai", un barbecue en Afrikaans, dans le ciel et le servant aux passagers. Des passagers d'Air Uganda ont eu la possibilité de choisir les ingrédients pour créer leurs propres sandwichs ou salades. A noter que la nourriture a un goût différent en vol. Au fur et à mesure que l'appareil prend de l'altitude, le changement de la pression de l'air engourdit environ un tiers de nos papilles gustatives.

La restauration en vol dispose donc d'un fort potentiel marketing. Les compagnies africaines peuvent utiliser ce vecteur pour séduire les passagers puis les fidéliser. C'est le cas des transporteurs chinois qui offrent des prestations raffinées comme une cérémonie du thé personnalisée en classe première et business.

Les compagnies aériennes africaines peuvent aussi s'inspirer de leurs propres terroirs afin de faire émerger la richesse de l'identité culinaire africaine.

*The annual Aircraft Interiors Expo (AIX) was held at the Hamburg Messe on April 8-10, attracting thousands of people from all branches of the aviation industry. Steve Nichols took a look inside.*



Global Eagle's Melissa Pauleat displays its tablet-based IFEC content.

# AIX: the inside story

**T**he Expo, in the giant halls of the Hamburg Messe, attracted more than 500 suppliers, ensuring all visitors saw something of interest.

One of the highlights of the event was the Crystal Cabin Awards, which were held for the eighth time at AIX.

Seven winners received their trophies at a ceremony at the Hotel Atlantic Kempinski on the banks of Hamburg's outer Alster Lake.

Just two days earlier, each of the 21 finalists had appeared before the 24 international experts of the judging panel for final questions.

Initially, 54 submissions from 12 nations made it on to the shortlist. But, ultimately, the winners were DIEHL Aerospace, B/E Aerospace, Schott, ZIM Flugsitz, Lufthansa Technik, Paperclip Design, and Delft Tech University.

The first award of the evening, in the 'greener cabin, health, safety and environment' category went to cabin-fitting specialist DIEHL Aerospace for its power-saving, self-sufficient cabin system using rechargeable and replaceable battery trolleys. The trolleys can simply be swapped and the battery systems recharged during aircraft ground time.

The trophy for 'industrial design and visionary concepts' went to US-based cooperative partners B/E Aerospace and Teague. Their advanced lavatory in a slimline toilet module allows for six additional seats to be integrated into an aircraft without sacrificing space or comfort.

German glass manufacturer Schott took the accolade for the 'material and components' category with its innovative lightweight glass

structure for cabin windows, made out of glass composites with a foil coating.

Meanwhile, the trophy for the 'passenger comfort hardware' section went to ZIM Flugsitz for its short-haul and medium-haul EC-00 seat, with a new, patented backrest concept. This includes a new folding table structure, a new backrest itself, and an innovative connection between the backrest surface and the upholstery to make cleaning easier.

Lufthansa Technik won the 'passenger comfort systems' section with acWAP – a high-speed WLAN router that even supports data-intensive applications like video streaming and online games throughout the cabin. The new system will enter into operation this summer on board 20 Lufthansa Airbus A321 aircraft.



The penultimate award for the 'premium class and VIP category' was won by Paperclip Design from Hong Kong. The company's long-haul seat concept can be converted from premium economy to a full-flat business option. This allows airlines to adapt the allocation of business and economy seats on a long-haul flight based on load factors.

The final winner was TU Delft for the 'university' category. Three students created 'sense the transitions', an innovative in-flight entertainment concept where videos are projected on to the backrest of the seat in front, showing information about the culture, history and natural environment of the land currently below the aircraft.

In terms of products with an African flavour at AIX, Cape Town-based Cobham was showing its new high-power, low-noise amplifier and diplexer-enhanced low gain antenna (HELGA) antenna for Inmarsat's SwiftBroadband systems. Designed with Inmarsat's upcoming safety services certification in mind, the Cobham Aviator S system can work down to five degrees satellite elevation above the horizon.

The current small SBB antennas work down to about 20 degrees, but the lower angle coverage will be needed when SBB is certified for aviation safety services.

HELGA has the RF amplifier built into its base and uses a fourth-generation phased array. Debbie de Beer, Cobham Satcom's account manager said that it is aimed at both the commercial airline and business aircraft markets.

Global Eagle Entertainment was also showing how tablet-based in-flight entertainment and communication systems (IFE) could replace bulky embedded IFEC.

The tablet offers a browser-based method of accessing IFE content. If the passenger is using an Android device, he or she can log straight on to the Wi-Fi. If it is an Apple iOS device an application must be downloaded first – the on-board player app is free from the Apple Store.

The system also offers digital rights management (DRM) for late window movie content and was due to launch on two airlines as *African Aerospace* was going to press.

Melissa Pauleat, Globe Eagle's director of marketing and communications, said the solution offered a lot for the airlines.



## SOMMAIRE

## AIX vu de l'intérieur

L'exposition annuelle "Aircraft Interiors" de Hambourg (AIX) a attiré des milliers de visiteurs professionnels de l'industrie aéronautique mondiale ainsi que plus de 500 industriels venant de 256 pays. C'était aussi l'occasion pour la remise des trophées "Crystal Cabin Award". Sept lauréats ont été récompensés par 24 jurys.

Les trophées reviennent donc à la société Diehl Aerospace dans la catégorie "Greener Cabin, Health, Safety and Environment", à B/E Aerospace dans la catégorie "Industrial Design and Visionary Concepts", à Schott dans la catégorie "Material and Components", à ZIM Flugsitz dans la catégorie "Passenger Comfort Hardware", Lufthansa Technik dans la catégorie "Passenger Comfort Systems", à Paperclip Design dans la catégorie "Premium Class and VIP" et enfin l'université de Delft Tech pour leur système de divertissement novateur nommé "Sense the Transitions".

Parmi les nouveautés, la société sud-africaine Cobham qui a exposé ses produits dont la nouvelle antenne (HELGA). La société Global Eagle Entertainment a mis en avant les performances de sa tablette de divertissement en vol de même que son système de communication IFE. Elle compte parmi ses clients, de nombreux transporteurs africains, comme Kenya Airways, South African Airways, Air Namibia, RwandAir ou encore Air Nigeria. La société OnAir, basée à Genève, fournira à TAAG Angola Airlines des connections Internet et mobile sur sa nouvelle flotte de Boeing B777-300.

Le salon AIX a également été l'occasion pour Airbus de dévoiler aux médias la cabine intérieure de l'A350 XWB. En novembre 2012, Afriqayah avait annoncé sa décision d'augmenter sa future flotte d'A350 XWB avec une nouvelle commande ferme de quatre avions. Elle a aussi converti sa commande initiale de six A350-800 en six A350-900. L'Airbus MSN002 a aussi été exposé dans son usine à Hambourg. C'est le premier, des deux avions d'essais, équipé d'une cabine intérieure avec son fuselage très large qui offrira aux passagers plus d'espace personnel, de flexibilité et de confort.

L'exposition AIX 2014 a été une nouvelle fois un bon cru pour l'ensemble des visiteurs qui ont déjà pris rendez-vous pour l'édition de 2015.



Above: The business class cabin of the new A350 XWB.



Left: Cobham Satcom's Debbie de Beer, from Cape Town, shows off the company's new HELGA Aviator S antenna.

"They can also use it to handle and raise additional ancillary revenues through shopping opportunities," Pauleat said. "And this can be made route specific."

"All the information is held on a central server that can be updated via the aircraft's connectivity (if fitted) or even a USB memory stick."

As well as supplying content to Etihad, Qatar and Emirates, Golden Eagle also works with a number of African carriers including Air Kenya, South African Airways, Air Namibia, RwandAir and Air Nigeria through UK-based IFE Services, which it acquired recently.



On the connectivity front, Geneva-based OnAir announced that TAAG Angola Airlines has become its first sub-Saharan African customer, line fitting its new Boeing B777-300ER fleet with both Internet OnAir and Mobile OnAir.

The airline is using Thales' TopConnect and Inmarsat SwiftBroadband to access OnAir's in-flight Wi-Fi and mobile phone services on its new fleet, to be delivered from May 2014.

Captain Lourenço Manuel Gomes Neto, executive vice president operations, TAAG Angola Airlines, said: "OnAir connectivity, in

the form of in-flight Wi-Fi and GSM, gives our passengers the freedom to stay in touch with the world outside the aircraft, strongly enhancing their experience. The worldwide service reliability is particularly important, given the routes we fly across Africa."

Passengers using TAAG Angola's B777-300ER will experience both internet and mobile phone connectivity. The in-flight Wi-Fi solution, Internet OnAir, enables passengers to e-mail, update their social media and browse news sites. Like a Wi-Fi hotspot on the ground, passengers only need to log on and enter their credit card details before they are free to surf the internet.

Passengers can also use OnAir's in-flight GSM product, Mobile OnAir, to e-mail, text, talk and use their mobile apps as they please. Charges are included in the user's monthly phone bill, exactly like using international roaming.

The eve of AIX was also used as an opportunity to unveil the interior of the Airbus A350 XWB to journalists and the media. With Afriqayah being listed as one of the first customers, the Libyan-based airline was keen to see what its passengers could expect.

In November 2012, Afriqayah Airways announced that it had increased its future A350 XWB fleet with a new firm order for four A350-900s and converted its original order for six

A350-800s into six of the larger A350-900 model.

Airbus aircraft MSN002 was on display at its giant factory in Hamburg. It is the first of two test aircraft fitted with a passenger interior, which demonstrates how its extra-wide fuselage will offer passengers more personal space, flexibility and comfort in both business and economy classes, with a full 18-inch wide seat in a nine-abreast economy configuration.

In all, the AIX had a good buzz and always felt full and busy. Participants reported good interest in their products.

Next year's AIX will take place at the same venue from April 14-16.

# all in a day

PEOPLE / PERSONNES

## Jim Evans

*African Aerospace speaks to the chairman and CEO of Africair.*



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### ■ What does Africair do?

We are the largest Cessna Aircraft Company distributor in the world.

As Cessna's exclusive Authorized Sales Representative for 48 countries in and around Africa, we distribute the entire Cessna product line, from the Cessna single engine piston Skyhawk to the fastest general aviation aircraft in the world, the Citation X.

Cessna has manufactured more general aviation aircraft than any other company, and is recognized as the industry leader in safety, reliability, performance and innovation.

In addition to selling new and used Cessna aircraft, we provide spare parts, product support, warranty administration, maintenance and technical support, and training coordination. We are also the independent representative for Bell Helicopter/Textron for 33 countries in and around Africa, excluding southern Africa.

Our headquarters is in Miami but have an office in Nairobi.

### ■ What do you see as the biggest aviation challenge in Africa and how do you see its future?

I think the challenges are different in each country - some have better airports than others, which I would say is the biggest difference.

But, as a whole, we find countries in Africa pretty safe. We know it very well and fly our own aircraft around the continent with no huge challenges, quite the opposite really as we feel Africa is the market to be in, it's going to be massive for aviation and we won't have to wait long to see it.

We recreated the Angolan Training Academy last year, supplying it with new aircraft, simulators, and technical support - the country now has a fully functional training academy. We're doing it now with Ethiopian Airlines and previously did it for Egypt.

Africa is expanding market. It has a projected growth rate that is the highest in the world, though it may be uneven as other countries grow, others may lag.

We're excited to be a part of it.

### ■ What does a typical day involve for you?

It is quite varied as it depends on the day and which country I am in. I live in Miami but spend a good seven months of the year in Africa. I do have to have a lot of patience with regards to travel and all the people I meet. It's important for me to develop close and important relationships with our customers and potential customers.

As a company, we want the customer to have confidence in us and that they have made the right decision choosing us, so a lot of my time is used to strengthen the relationships to perform our business.

We make sure we deliver an aircraft to the customers needs.

The work for us starts as the aircraft arrives through to making sure our customers are happy after delivery.

I also make sure we build on our close relationship with our manufacturers and the civil aviation authorities.

### ■ What challenges do you face in your role?

Due to the recession, the last five years in aviation have been difficult for all manufacturers but the economy is now growing and there is a demand.

As a company, we weathered that situation well, mainly as we deliver to a lot of government agencies as well as corporate aircraft owners, and we are seeing more and more private customers.

### ■ You fly a Cessna yourself and the company owns a CJ3. What are the popular aircraft in Africa?

The Grand Caravan EX is the most. It is very durable and reliable for Africa - it's also safe and economical to operate. Our company is the biggest distributor of this aircraft. It's used as transport generally, but in East Africa it's used as transport between game lodges.

The Bell 42 Helicopter is very popular and used a lot in medical evacuations.

“The challenges are different in each country - some have better airports than others, which I would say is the biggest difference.”

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